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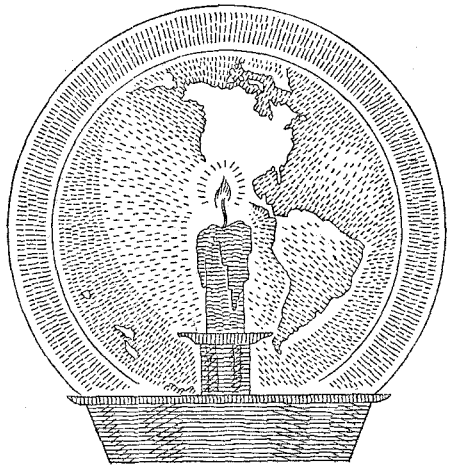

Onward, Sons of Ingersoll!

A STORY

By Sinclair Lewis

In all of central Ohio in the 1890's the most pious village was East Vermont Crossing, and in all of East Vermont Crossing and the appertaining suburbs of Catfish Crick and Dutchman's Holler the most pious person was Mr. Jonathan E. Jappers.

He was a plagiarism; a shameless copy of something that hadn't yet even been written, for obviously he was right out of *Way Down East,* as revised by Eugene O'Neill, Ibsen, and Bishop Cannon, in lugubrious committee. He kept the larger of the two general stores in East Vermont Crossing, he wore a chin-whisker but not a collar, he lent money, he enjoyed suing to recover same, and he was chairman of the board of trustees of the local Inspirational church.

The Inspirationalists were and are a union of schismatic Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Campbellites who had seceded from their former folds, which they considered too lax in morals. You know the Continental saying:

"In Paris, everything is allowed that is not forbidden. In Berlin, everything is forbidden that is not allowed. And in Vienna, everything is allowed that is forbidden."

The Inspirationalists completed the circle with a simple and admirable rule: "Everything is forbidden." The fact that this included almost everything that almost every Inspirationalist did almost every day made it only the more interesting.

Back in the early 1890's, at least, it was forbidden among the Inspirationalists to wear bustles or fancy vests—even nice, spotted calfskin vests. It was forbidden to indulge the flesh with such intoxicants as ginger ale and root beer. It was forbidden to dance, to play cards or that degenerate game "authors," or to kiss the girls. Most particularly was it forbidden to read fiction, with its soul-destroying hint that people did do all those things. And if Jonathan Jappers had some difficulty in always heeding the injunctions against taking usury from one's brother and against cocking an interested eye at the ankles of pretty widows, yet he was awesome in his strict avoidance of bustles, pop, dancing, and the novels; and what he said about them at prayer-meeting would blanch the flushed and guilty cheeks of self-indulgent sinners.

Nor was he less devout in matters of doctrine. He knew that Darwin was frying in hell and by his in-

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cessant screaming showing that he could not take it. He knew that all persons who failed to attend church, and the Inspirational church, at that, three times a week, would soon, and most gratifyingly, join Darwin. He knew that the earth was flat. He knew, and disdained to explain to doubters just how he knew, that the Lord God Almighty, creator of sun and sea and mountain, spent all his time sneaking around behind barns, trying to catch little boys smoking corn silk.

Now Jonathan Jappers had a son, and the name of that son was Ira.

In 1895, when he was twenty, Ira was a thin and pallid youth whose tremendous beak overshadowed his streamlined jaw. The smart horseshoe-pitching set of East Vermont Crossing despised him for his ineptness in baseball, pinching muskmelons, tormenting cats, and bellybuster diving. He was an unsmiling, soul-aching youth, and never once had he taken a Crossing damsel out buggy-riding. Yet he had a curious strained courage. When Butch McGimph was amusing himself by touching up the household dog with turpentine, Ira suddenly fell upon him, knocked him out, and was busy finishing him with a chunk of maple when he was dragged off.

Jonathan Jappers spent a good deal of his time screeching at Ira. True, the son was dependable in his job as clerk in the general store, but when the store was shut—at 10 P.M., leaving Ira absolutely free to spend all the rest of the evening in any way he pleased, provided he should be ready to sweep out and open the store again at 6:45 next morning—Ira used his precious leisure not in arguing with the Presbyterian shoemaker about Free Will, nor in making covert inquiries about Jonathan's debtors, but in reading. Nor did he read, always, books sanctioned by the Inspirational church, such as *Animadversions on the Antinomian Heresies of Reverend T. J. Popple,* by Reverend Iezell. No. Ira was caught weakening his character with such pagan poetry as Longfellow and James Whitcomb Riley.

The dreadful, the utterly deplorable summer, then, of 1896.

A school teacher from Cleveland came to board in East Vermont Crossing, and rarely had Jonathan Jappers more detested any one. True, she did not wear vain gauds, but she walked by Wayne Creek at church-time on Sabbath mornings; she smiled irritatingly when Jonathan told her that, as an Episcopalian, she would certainly be cast into the Pit; she had a whole box of books and, worst, she lent them to Ira.

On a Sabbath afternoon, though he was supposed to be taking a righteous nap, Jonathan Jappers was watching from his up-stairs window. He was no particularly dignified spectacle, squatting on the floor, his spiny knees up under his goatish chin, while he peered through the two-inch space between the window-sill and the bilious yellow roller-curtain. But, dignified or not, he was adequately dramatic, so trembling were his shoulders, so fiercely did he gouge the back of his left hand with his right-hand nails.

It was as he had suspected!

He saw Ira sneak out of the gate, with a book under his arm, and, with dust spurts at every methodical slap of his heavy feet, plod eastward, away from the metropolis of East Vermont Crossing.

So! Going to meet that unspeakable wench, that Babylonian so-and-so, the Cleveland school teacher!

Jonathan meditatively scratched his ginger-snap neck. Jonathan reflectively waggled the straps of his galluses. Jonathan slowly drew his elastic-sided Congress shoes over his gray wool socks, and crept down-stairs and up the road, after Ira.

He caught the boy in a birch-grove, sitting cross-legged on the ground, and while it is true that the abominable school teacher was not with him, yet Ira was reading some book or other with an unjappersian excitement. Jonathan quivered, the tip of his nose quivered, like an old hound's. He tiptoed over and, snatching at the book, found that it was Darwin's *Origin of Species.*

It is hard for the present decade to understand it, for we have reached perfect tolerance, perfect wisdom. In 2135 the historians will marvel at us. We can drive 500 miles in twelve hours. We can and probably do go to Central Africa and, stringing a portable antenna between a giraffe and a Lesser Flowering Atalpa, listen to Rudy Vallee and to recipes for cooking cauliflower just as comfortably as if we were back in Evanston. We permit our children to read anything from Gertrude Stein's statistical studies of the NRA to the tender religious musings of H. L. Mencken. To comprehend what Jonathan Jappers felt when he saw Ira indulging in Darwin, we must imagine how it would be if one of our own little ones had turned leftwing Communist or had failed to report backgammon earnings in his income-tax return.

Jonathan seized the shoulder of his recalcitrant son in a buzzard-like grip and snarled, "So! I've cot you, my fine young man!"

Ira did not look respectfully frightened. He twitched his shoulder free, and arose.

"That's this atheist Darwin you're reading, that says we're all descended from monkeys in a tree."

"It is. He doesn't."

"Heh! Well! Very fine! I suppose that from now on you won't go to church! I suppose you won't work in the store! I suppose——"

"Kor-rect! I won't! Papa, Mr. Darwin is a lovely writer."

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"Young man, I cut you off with a nickel, right here and now!"

"Fine! Let me have the nickel! That's more than you've ever given me yet!"

Years later, Ira tried to make peace with his father, but the stern old man would never forgive his infidelity.

In 1931, the most pious borough, if any, in Greater New York was Brooklyn, and in all of Brooklyn, the most pious person was Ira Jappers, editor of *Trumpet of Truth*. He didn't know he was pious. Indeed, he believed that he was magnificently impious, being by profession an atheist.

He was the founder of the Sons of Ingersoll, a militant organization which was going, immediately, to chase all chaplains out of the army, navy, and Congress, to replace all bishops by lecturers who would entertain their congregations of bond-salesmen and truck-drivers every Sunday morning by instructive discourses on eugenics, and to have a statue of Robert G. Ingersoll erected facing the White House, in Washington. (Of course Ingersoll himself wasn't an atheist, but a rather sentimental agnostic, but why drag that in?)

To justify atheism, asserted Ira, its followers must be more beyond criticism than any Christian. In fact, his ethical doctrine could be expressed in the simple and admirable rule: "Everything is forbidden."

To Ira and his shrinking wife and his two children, Bob and Fanny (short for Robert G. Ingersoll Jappers and Fanny Wright Jappers) it was forbidden ever to taste meat, since it was the flesh of our little brothers of the field, to use tea, coffee, alcohol, or tobacco, to use slang or profanity, to dance, to play cards, or to blaspheme against the arts by enjoying Mickey Mouse or whistling "Gramma, damma, she came from Alabama."

The possession of a radio was forbidden, because preachers so often talked on it; and so was all attendance at the movies, with their corrupting Puritanical atmosphere; and as for automobiles, they must be kept for business and never must there be wasted in them any of the precious time which might be devoted to making converts to atheism.

No! The maculate Methodists, the corrupt Congregationalists, they might commit these vulgar offenses against the Higher Thought, but an atheist, maintained Ira, must stand out as a public monument of virtue—like the elevated railway.

And in his doctrine, Free Love was practically compulsory, since marriage was a priestly tyranny. It was regretfully, for the sake of the children, and then only in an alderman's office, that Ira and his wife had ever been married, and he still felt conscience-stricken about it.

All through the years since he had shaken from his feet the bigoted dust of East Vermont Crossing, Ira Jappers had had troubles. He had as many troubles as an alimony-digger in love with a psycho-analyst. He had left the Free-thinkers Guild and also the Atheist Committee for Direct Action because in both there had been a lot of jealous conspirators who wanted to run their societies themselves, instead of turning them over to Ira. He had founded his own show, the Sons of Ingersoll, which he still controlled, along with his dear friend and disciple, that distinguished scientist and enemy of the Medical Trust, Doctor Rolla Robbins Sneath, Doctor of Electherapeutology.

Ira looked, at fifty-six, amazingly like the Ira of twenty, except that he had added a mustache like a skein of pale yellow silk. His red-brick house, on Kluck Street, Brooklyn, had in every room stained wallpaper which was freckled with portraits of the heroes of atheism—sober and turtle-mouthed gentlemen, and ladies with tight hair. It was not precisely a house of mirth, though Doctor Rolla Robbins Sneath was given to back-slapping and to guffaws at whatever Bob Jappers might say, and Ira had a high giggle with which, as they sat over the festal Brussels sprouts or stewed apricots, he accompanied not particularly funny anecdotes about the crimes of preachers.

Bob could not decide whether he more hated the guffaw or the giggle.

For the gloomy truth is that, though he had been reared as a rigid orthodox atheist, Bob never had any real passion for it. He was sensible enough and sufficiently well-trained to realize that unless the statue of Ingersoll was erected in Washington right away, the entire country would be swamped in superstition, but he just couldn't get excited about it. In fact, at eighteen, for all the advantages of his scientific education, Bob Jappers was dreadfully like any other normal young American—like a Yale football captain, or a filling-station attendant, or a Rockefeller grandson, or a radio repairman, or any such healthy, commonplace sort of lad. And his sister Fanny, aged twenty, was just as bad, and pretty at that.

Indeed, the two children were among the most grievous of Ira's troubles, now in 1931.

The Executive Committee of the Sons of Ingersoll were being entertained to supper by Ira—not by Ira and his wife, for all she had to do with the meal was to plan it, cook it, serve it, and wash up afterward.

They were an impressive lot of philosophers.

Doctor Rolla Robbins Sneath stood there awaiting supper, so handsomely expansive with his globular white waistcoat, while he explained his new invention, the Vitamintal Apparatus, whose rays would plant in the human system both metallic salts and vitamins ranging from A to W. It was going to put all the

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wicked regular M.D.'s out of business. And there was Erasmus Pott, the author, famous for his pamphlet, "Unanswerable Proof that the Pope Has Purchased Property in Michigan and Intends to Move the Vatican to Battle Creek in 1933." Of this masterpiece, the publishers had sold 5000 copies, 4700 of them to Mr. Pott, who was also an eminent fishmonger.

There was Alex Tizwhistle, the renowned explorer of the Pocono Mountains; good old Jackson Gurry, who had once been a Seventh Day Adventist lay preacher but had seen the light and was now promoting civilization as a street-corner speaker on atheism; and, almost as powerful a force for the propagation of the faith as even the men, Miss Jezebel Yelp, author and lecturer, also proprietor of the best Portuguese employment-agency in Brooklyn.

And, more or less, there was Mrs. Jappers, with Bob and Fanny, but no one noticed that fact, they three least of all.

The pleasant combination of festival and business-meeting began, after Doctor Sneath had run out of breath and medical terms, with an atheist hymn. Ira was the author (and publisher) of a very witty and influential volume of hymns to be sung to the same tunes as those used by the benighted churches; and the committee now opened up their siege of the Citadels of Ignorance with:

From Greenland's icy glaciers
To India's jute-rich lands,
Human'ty bids us loose all
From superstition's bands.

It will be noted that Ira had not only improved the original ballad in spiritual sentiment, but also made the first lines distinctly more educational. Bob loved bright singing, and he thought this was a pretty good song, although up to five years ago, he had been somewhat confused by the belief that "superstition's bands" referred to the Salvation Army.

There followed an even more rollicking chorus:

Onward, Sons of Ingerso-ol,
Marching joyfullee,
With Voltaire, Darwin, Tom Paine,
Leading you and me.
These great fearless thin-in-kers,
In book and lab'tory
Back up with scientific facts
The truth that sets man free.

Then, happily, all were seated at supper. It is true that not all of them were chronic vegetarians, despite the pleadings of Ira Jappers and his powerful references to Bernard Shaw, Chinese coolies, and the larger apes. But who, they now assured one another, could resist Sister Japper's perfectly lovely prunola, spinach salad, and vegetable hot-dogs?

After supper, time for the business meeting, Bob and Fanny were chased out, though in so expansive a mood was their father that he entrusted Bob with fifteen cents, and giggled with parental fondness, "There, my boy! Blow this in, any way you'd like—except for candy or anything deleterious to the health, of course."

Forlornly, Bob and Fanny Jappers roamed the classic streets of Brooklyn.

"Do you honestly like old Doc Sneath?" speculated Bob.

"No! He's always trying to put his arm around me. Fatherly, *he* calls it!" wailed Fanny.

"Gosh, sometimes I almost wonder if the whole bunch of 'em are on the up an' up—even Pa. I get awful' sick of his chewing the rag about the wickedness of priests and preachers. But, gosh, what's awful is the street-meetings. Maybe I don't hate passing the hat, and all those roughnecks and dumb clucks snickering at you and stepping on your feet and breathing garlic down your neck, and Pa yelling so— 'No, my friends, we shall nev-er cease our great cru-sade until the last king is strangled with the en-trails of the last priest.' Nuts!"

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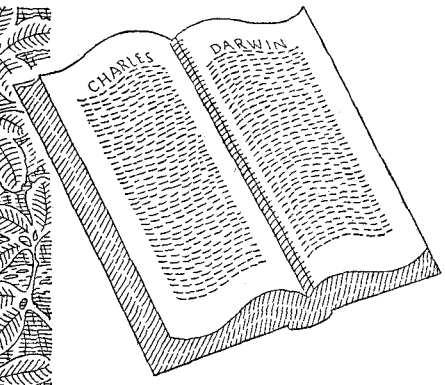

"Why, Bob Jappers! What a dreadful, sinful way to talk! Don't you realize that Pa and Doctor Sneath—even if he is a garter-snapper—they're clearing the way for a deeper and sweller life?"

"That's what they say! Do you believe 'em?"

"Well, of course—" Fanny stopped on the sidewalk, put her doubled forefinger to her lips, and wriggled with embarrassment. "I dunno!"

"*Do* you?"

"Of course I do! You stop being so flippant and everything! You know perfectly well that once young people start questioning and doubting and trying to show off how smart they are, it's the beginning of the end, and they may wind up a Baptist or maybe even a high-church Episcopalian in a Rolls-Royce!"

"I know. Oh, I'm a true believer in atheism," Bob said sanctimoniously. "But these street-meetings— Oh gosh, I wish Pa would let me learn to be an aviator. Don't you think I look like Lindbergh?"

They were interrupted by the sound of singing. They looked up to see that they were in front of a vast red-brick church: the Vantittle Avenue Inspirational Tabernacle.

"Ever been in a church?" inquired Bob.

"Why! What an idea! Certainly not!"

"Well, neither have I, of course. Still, might be kind of interesting. Must be kind of interesting to hear some of these crass appeals to the lowest mentalities that Pa's always telling about."

"Yes, maybe."

They gazed more intently now at the Tabernacle. There was a large signboard with adjustable letters, which proclaimed: "The church with the handshake. Pastor: The Rev. Llewellyn St. David Ringside, M.A., D.D.—'Call me Lew.' This evening: Informal missionary supper & movie-lecture, 35c."

As they read, they were conscious of the most entic-ing odor, as of all the spice isles of the Caribbees, floating to them from the basement of the church, and conscious again of the joyful singing from within: a chorus which set their toes tapping:

When the roll——
Oh when the roll——
Is called up yon-der,
When the roll is called up yonder
I'll be there.

"Gosh, that's pretty. Gosh, I wish I knew it," mourned Bob. "Gosh, wouldn't Pa pan hell out of me if he heard me using words like 'Gosh'! But . . . that missionary supper smells good to me! Gosh! Say, aren't you still hungry, even after that slop we ate tonight? Gosh!"

"Hungry? Great aunt's cat's pants! I'm always hungry!"

"Could you eat another supper?"

"What do you mean, 'another' supper?"

Now at the mansion of Ira Jappers, the evening meal was served promptly at six, even as it had been in East Vermont Crossing, or if it wasn't, Sister Jappers heard about it. And there was never anything on the table to make one linger. So now, as the youngsters loitered before the church, it was not yet seven, and the missionary supper was still in its stride.

Bob sniffed again at that odor which hinted of moonlight and roses and nightingales and buckwheat cakes and slim white princesses and towered castles and Château Yquem and sandalwood and greyhounds with tinkling silver bells.

"Say!" he said. "It says this supper here is thirty-five cents per each. And I've got a dollar!"

"Huh? What? Why Bob Jappers, wherever did you get a dollar? I never heard of such a thing! What would Pa say?"

"He'd say the entire lectures of Ingersoll! I got it distributing coffee samples, last Saturday."

"Oh! Bob! How could you? When coffee, whose active principle is the dangerous drug caffein, is second

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only to alcohol in its destructive effect upon the nerve tissue!"

"Aw nuts! Ever drink any?"

"I will not have you saying 'Aw nuts' to me! You might be a gentleman, even if you are a brother!"

"Well, *did* you ever drink any?"

"Well, yes—just a little, once, at Miss Yelp's."

"Didn't you like it?"

Now with her intense religious training, Fanny disliked lying—except when it was necessary—and she reluctantly muttered, "Um-huh."

"Well then, just for that— What's the use of being kids if we haven't got nerve? Try anything once! Let's take the risk and try the missionary supper."

Silent, with a grim look of hunger upon her magazine-cover face, Fanny followed him resolutely into the den of iniquity. The missionary supper was being held in the large basement of the Tabernacle, which was jammed with long tables upon trestles, and packed with gaily jabbering people in their brightest clothes—just the sort of dissipated throng that their father had depicted as frequenting Monte Carlo, churches, Princeton, and all suchlike haunts of superstition and leisure-class wastefulness. As they edged into the basement, with their boldness melting into timidity, a large man, in a tasty checked suit and a bright yellow necktie, seized a hand of each, and cried, "Well, strangers, welcome to our midst! Pull right up to a table and refresh the inner man! I'm the pastor, Doctor Ringside, but call me 'Lew.' Don't believe I've ever had the pleasure of meeting you dear young people, have I?"

"N-no, sir. We-we haven't ever been to church—to this church—before. But our Pa was brought up an Inspirationalist."

Oh, Bob, so young, so soon to sin, so apt to evil ways! Oh, what a tangled web we are going to weave—*what* a web!

"Well, well! Then we must win you back to the old church home. We must make you feel welcome. Harriet!"

At the pastor's summons, a lively girl, as lamblike and rosebudlike as Fanny herself, came gambolling up, to be introduced:

"This is my daughter, Harrietta—Harriet for short—sort of named after both Henry Ward Beecher and Harry Emerson Fosdick. Harry, these two dear young people have never been in our shop before, so take 'em around and introduce 'em and see they get an absotively genormous feed."

"You bet!" said Harriet.

Bob was jabbed by envy. To have a father to whom you could say a simple, natural, beautiful thing like "You bet!" There was unmanning charm in this abode of sin!

Harriet led them to what Doctor Ringside called "the groaning board," and quite right, too. No wonder it was groaning. The Ladies' Aid of the Vantittle Avenue church contained plenty of Mothers in Zion who hailed not from the bare though tinselled kitchenettes of Greater New York but from the bountiful larders of Massachusetts and Maine and Pennsylvania. They had flung themselves upon the preparation of the missionary supper like so many greyhounds chasing an electrical rabbit, and the vegetarianized and uncaffeined Bob and Fanny began to stuff themselves with——

Church supper! Peerless institution!

Hot veal-loaf with spiced tomato sauce did Bob and Fanny devour. Fried chicken with corn fritters. Chicken fricassee with dumplings. Chicken salad. Waldorf salad. Pans of Boston baked beans with slabs of salt pork that looked like blotting-paper and tasted like Heaven. Little pork sausages, hot. Cold ham and liver sausage and roast lamb. Fried oysters. Scalloped oysters. Scalloped potatoes. Banana fritters. Angel's-food cake. Chocolate layer-cake. Cocoanut layer-cake. Hermit cookies. Doughnuts. Coffee poured into vast stony cups from a tin coffee-pot big as a trench mortar and as powerful.

Partly from awe and partly from ecstasy, the young atheists were silent until they had stuffed themselves like rucksacks. When they could no longer move anything save their eyes and their tongues, Bob groaned to Harriet Ringside, who had been fluttering between them and other strangers, "Gosh, that's the loveliest meal I ever ate!"

"Oh, it's just our regular church-supper, Mr. Jappers."

He had not often been called "Mister"; certainly not by such a morning skylark as Harriet. He gulped. The music in her voice was almost as gratifying to him as the Vienna loaf with tomato sauce, and in almost intolerable generosity Harriet was going on:

"I do hope you and your sister will come lots of times. Lookit! Whyn't you two come out home to the Pastorium with me this evening? Have you got your car with you?"

"N-no——"

"Then I'll drive you in mine."

So, filled with baked beans and beatitude, Bob looked from the rumble-seat upon his sister's sleek dark hair, and the rippling honey-colored head of Harriet, after they had sat through a jolly talk by Doctor Ringside with an enthralling movie depicting missionaries, handsome as Franchot Tone in their linen suits and topis, doing the choicest adventures, such as shooting rapids, beating up hideous idols, and preaching in luscious palm groves.

Bob had completely fallen into sin, and he liked it very much.

As he sat there in the rumble-seat, he might just as well never have heard Erasmus Potts's revelation of the

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inside stuff on the plot whereby the Episcopal, Methodist, Moravian, and Abyssinian Bishops were going to turn their folds right over to the Catholics as soon as the Pope was settled in Battle Creek. He saw himself in a sun helmet, with a waterproofed hymnal, swimming the N'Gomgika at dawn. He was a lost boy.

The moment they came into the living-room of the parsonage—a handsome apartment hung with original water-colors done by Mrs. Ringside in Palestine—Harriet turned on the radio and got the Chicago Bar-B-Qties singing "Don't Oo Call Me Baby 'Les Oo Is a Sugar Dad." Bob was shocked. He felt that if he were Ira Jappers, he would have the courage to testify, and to rebuke Harriet for humming in tune to such vulgar flippancy. Bob could not see that the Chicago Bar-B-Qties tended in the least to advance scientific ethics and proletarian class-consciousness, which is the one excuse for Art.

Yet he looked at Harriet's throat and said nothing.

He was shocked also to find that most of the books in the room were not handy manuals of biology and astronomy and Fiji ethnology, as in his father's library, but novels—and what novels! Not the works of safe and standard authors, who were good because they were dead, but those of mere frivolous tale-tellers, like P. G. Wodehouse and Dreiser.

Yet he looked fatuously approving when Harriet carolled, "Lookit! I'll call up a boy I know—Bruce Lippett—he's a swell egg—no, he's not the boy-friend—I haven't got any, poor me!—you can have him, Fanny, if you can get away with it. Lookit! Wait for me on the up-stairs porch—see; up those stairs and turn right."

She frisked out and Bob, gloating on her trim back, sighed with happiness. So she had no boy-friend. She was going to have one, immediately! But still——

Oh, thunder. Well, maybe he could win her over to atheism, and then Pa wouldn't mind.

With Harriet, they watched from the upper porch while a hatless, glossy youth rocketed up to the curb in a low sports roadster of the type that Ira Jappers most disapproved, and Bob most coveted.

"There's Bruce," said Harriet.

"Oh, is that Bruce?" murmured Fanny.

"That's him," flung out Harriet, with what struck Bob as profundity and precision.

Bruce was full of friendliness. He was calling them "Bob" and "Fan" within fifteen minutes, and trying to arrange a movie party for next evening. Then Bob showed his first courage since venturing into that enfeebling Venusberg, the Vantittle Avenue Tabernacle:

"Sorry, no can do. I'm busted. My dad doesn't give me any allowance. When I finish high school, this month, I'm going to get a job, if there are any of the doggone things to get. Decided I won't go to college. When I do get a job, I'll be able to pay my share. Then we'll get going!"

Fanny gaped. This was the first that she had heard of Bob's gallant determination.

It was also the first that Bob had heard of it.

Bruce cried, "Fine! Prob'ly I can get you a job in my dad's business, where I'm working—the International Mammoth Auto Paint Corporation—we got a grand business there—we're employing sixteen men now and a boy!"

"Maybe I can be the boy!" Bob said lightly, and they all laughed, and the maple leaves and the lawn-sprinklers and the crescent moon and the amorous cats all laughed with them, in Youth's high comedy of sudden love.

All night long—anyway, for at least one minute out of each hour, all night long—Bob tried to remember just how Harriet looked.

Her hair was not only honey, but also pale gold, and the wheat sheaves borne by Ruth amid the alien corn. Her arms were ivory, doe's milk, and branches of the birch. Her nose—well, not so much about her nose. It freckled. Her lips were cherries, rubies, and rose-petals. Her teeth would have adorned the most classic tooth-paste advertisements. She was formed like an antelope, a dove, a racing plane. She was as wise as Lady Astor, as witty as Mary Pickford, and as tolerant as Alice Longworth, and she knew more about baseball scores than any of them.

She was, in fact, a typical Brooklyn girl of 1931.

In Bruce's car, the four young people had gone to the movies.

Quite shamelessly, now, Bob could look upon pictures like *Machine-gun Moll,* though he knew that the movies were as much a waste of leisure as jig-saw puzzles or solitaire, and that by rights he ought to be home, improving his mind by reading about the "Awful Revelation, True Story of Denver Pastor Caught Playing Pinochle with Female Sunday School Teacher," in his father's weekly, *The Trumpet of Truth,* or perhaps skimming through a brochure on the errors in Ricardo's theory of the market value of commodities.

After the show, they stopped at Ye Olde Cheshire Grille: Prescriptions Carefully Compounded, for a coke and a hamburg sandwich. The deadly meat habit already had Bob in its unrelenting clutches. Back at the Pastorium, that gaily hopping robin of a woman, Mrs. Ringside, greeted them, "Well, chickabiddies, how was the show?"

"Oh, swell, Gertrude," said Harriet.

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"Yuh, it was *swell!*" chorused Bob and Bruce.

"How's the job going, Bob?" asked Mrs. Ringside.

"Say," declared Bruce, "our lil Bobbo is a nachel-born salesman. He'll be sales-manager inside five years. Why, say, you wouldn't think it to look at him, but that dumb egg could sell auto paint to an Eskimo!"

"How about making you sweetumses some cocoa?" suggested Mrs. Ringside.

It was, Bob reflected, always like that at the Pastorium: such a jolly, friendly, witty atmosphere; so wholesome. Yet he was not happy. All evening, behind his apparent mirth, he had been fretting. He could not go on deceiving his darling Harriet and all these dear people. And when Doctor Ringside blew in, ruddy and boisterous after a fine evening at the annual Tell-Your-Middle-Name-Bill Dinner of the Boosters' Club, Bob was nerved to courage. He did not hedge. He blurted:

"I guess maybe Fanny and I have had about the best time of our lives with you-all, and I don't think we ought to go on fooling you. We aren't real Christians. Our Pa is Ira Jappers, the atheist—the one that talks against the church—right out on street-corners!"

Doctor Ringside roared, "Haw, haw, haw! Why, my boy, I've known that ever since two days after we met you. Do you for one single little moment suppose that we'd let our darling daughterkins pal around with and indeed, if the phrase is not too colloquial, become, I might say, sweet upon a young man of however pleasing a manner and general outward exterior, since as we all know from our own experience, sometimes it is but too sadly true that a fair front hides a falsity within, however gloomy the thought may be, and yet if we are to be stalwart churchmen and not mere sickly and one might almost say effeminate bookworms, fooling ourselves with the belief, so contrary equally to all experience and all sound logic, that in mere learning, upon no matter what theological subjects, there lies a saintliness that—no, no, a thousand times no, for it is only the religion that dares the dust and clamor of the dire combat and the very weariness and long travail of the trail and that is not to be turned aside by the gory visage and aspect of the foe as seen directly and, I may say, face to face, and to whom the resounding trumpet brings not dread nor any turning aside from the frenzy of the fray, but joy and exhilaration of action, that can claim to—Where was I? Oh, yes. What I mean to say is, Bob: I looked you up and I thought it all over and decided that your father is an honest, even if dreadfully misguided man, and that you, associating with us here, would soon see your errors and be one of us."

"Oh, I'd like to, Doctor——"

"Lew!"

"I'd like to, Lew, but I just can't seem to accept all your beliefs. Say like Jonah and the whale. How could he, scientifically speaking, ever survive——"

Doctor Ringside roared again, Mrs. Ringside tittered, Harriet shrieked, Bruce snickered, and as for Fanny, she stopped crying. Doctor Ringside patted Bob on the shoulder and good-naturedly explained, "Why, my boy, a good Christian of today, yes, and a baptized Inspirationalist, at that, can believe or disbelieve such ancient chronicles as those of Jonah and Noah and Adam just as his conscience dictates. To a good many of us, such ancient stories are really glorious symbols—universal tales like *Don Quixote* or *Hamlet.*"

"Honestly? Now I see it all!" rejoiced Bob.

On a Sunday morning when he was supposed to be preparing his evening atheistic sermon on "The Fallacies of Orthodox Euclidean Geometry," to be delivered at Sons of Ingersoll Hall, Ira Jappers was watching from his up-stairs window. He was no particularly dignified spectacle, squatting on the floor, his spiny knees up under his plucked-chicken chin, while he peered through the two-inch space between the window-sill and the bilious green roller-curtain. He gouged at the back of his hand with his nails. He saw his children, Robert and Fanny, sneak out of the gate and plod westward. He crept down-stairs and after them. He saw them—it was the second time, now—enter the Vantittle Avenue Tabernacle.

That noon, when they returned home, he met them in the hall and snarled, "So, my fine young friends, I've cot you! You've been going to church!"

"We have," answered his truthful son. "And both Fan and I are teaching Sunday School."

Ira staggered. It was a moment before he could gasp, "And that isn't the worst of it—the theological side. It may be that Doctor Ringside is an honest, though he is an abysmally misguided man. Better his antiquated faith than no passion at all about intellectual matters. It's your morals that really overwhelm me. Here you are, a well-brought-up atheist, who should be showing the world by your example that we are better than anybody else. And what do you do? You eat the shameless lamb-chop!"

"Yes, sir."

"And yet you can't help but realize that— Do you know that Bernard Shaw, now seventy-five, has never touched meat, coffee, tobacco, or pie à la mode, never once weakened the fibers of his will-power and ruined his stomach by gobbling chop sooey, never stooped to beholding any movie unless it was made in Russia, no, nor ever given a chorus girl a ten-cent-store ruby necklace?"

"Yes, but Pa, don't you remember that Voltaire did do all these things, except maybe the movies, and he lived to be eighty-four, and he was louder and fun-

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nier than Shaw, even? You remember what Taine says!"

Now it is true that Bob himself didn't remember what Taine said. He didn't know whether Taine had ever mentioned Voltaire. Indeed, he wasn't particularly sure who Taine was, anyway. But he had been trained in the estimable theological school of street-corner argument, and with gravity he heard his father counter:

"Certainly. Of course I remember what he said. That's an entirely different matter, as I shall explain when I have the time. But— See here, my fine young man. You'd better confess, for your sins—or rather, I mean, your social tendencies—will find you out. Into what other degenerate habits have these Inspirationalist backsliders led you? Have you been going to the movies?"

"Listen, Pa, you might as well know our entire moral stand. Way I figure it out, there's nothing that corrects the antiquated ideas of the Older Generation like having Youth, that means me, explain the New Morality."

"You got all that from me!"

"And so, to let you understand the New Generation: Fanny and me, we set our faces like rocks—rocks, isn't it, or maybe flints—against alcohol and tobacco and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and low language. But both of us advocate and fearlessly indulge in chewing-gum and Floyd Gibbons's broadcasting and dunking doughnuts and one-piece bathing-suits and pickled pigs'-feet and Tarzan, and especially fried bananas with cocoanut ice cream and hot chocolate sauce and a cherry on 'em."

"Anathema! I cut you both off with a dime, right here and now!"

"Well I'll be doggone!" whimpered Bob, who had been convinced that he was leading Ira into the New Light.

It was in March, 1935, that the two especial events happened: Bob Jappers, though he was but twenty-two, was made assistant sales-manager of the International Mammoth Auto Paint Corporation, which, like all other manufactories of any sort whatever, had recently taken on a side-line of electric refrigerators. This history of Bob is a perfect Alger story.

And on March 11, 1935, was born the first child of Bob and Harriet, a fine little fellow who was going to be christened Wesley.

As soon as Harriet could sit up, there was a merry party with Doctor and Mrs. Ringside, and Bruce and Mrs. Lippett—the former Fanny Wright Jappers. Bob had urgently invited his father, but the stern old man would not forgive his infidelity.

"Well, well, well, well, well," asserted Doctor Ringside. "Here we are met together to rejoice in this happy event, to, in fact, drink the health—though in the cup that cheers but not inebriates—of this fine little tot who is, we may be sure, whatever path he may follow, yet along it is to carry on, as his parents and their parents before them and *their* parents before that and so on along the mysterious backtreading path that links us to the immemorial beginnings, though this is not necessarily, by any means, to be construed as an endorsement of literal Evolution—but I mean to say, in his turn to carry on the torch of civilization and of Inspirationalism—in contrast to the bigoted medievalism of the outmoded denominations on the one hand and the cynical and destructive infidelism of certain up-start cults on the other—and you will understand that I do not mean any rude reference to your father, Bob, who no doubt feels that he must follow the truth as he sees it and—Where was I? Oh, yes. I was going to ask what plans you have for young Wesley's future?"

"Well, of course I want him to start going to Sunday School not one minute later than five. And some day—of course I shan't try to in any way unduly influence him—I hope, Lew, that, like yourself, I am thoroughly modern and advanced both as regards religion and education—but still, I shall personally be very glad if, after college, he enters an Inspirational theological seminary."

"Splendid, splendid, my boy! But what about discipline? When must we prepare for war? Why, when but in the—what is it—oh, yes; in the piping times of peace—or is it in the time of piping peace?—funny how I forget these things, and yet with all modesty I may say that I led my whole class in English composition, also oratory, at Henry Higgins College. What I mean is: Forget Wes's present state of sinlessness and think what you would do if some blackly tragic day you found your son was drinking rum!"

"Oh!" wailed Harriet.

"And what would you do if he played cards for money?"

"I'd thrash him within an inch of his life!" shouted Bob.

"And what if he paid no attention to religion—just never went to church?"

"I'd cut him off with a quarter!"

"That's the spirit. Children will respect you all the more if you chasten 'em. After all, isn't it to our fathers and grandfathers that we owe everything? Oh, say, by the way, 'fore I forget it, Bob, happened to notice little item in the paper about an old codger named Jonathan Jappers who's just died at the advanced age of ninety-five, out some place in Ohio—Vermont Center or some such name. Any relation of yours?"

"I don't believe so," said Bob.

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GREEN HILLS

By Ernest

PART IV · *Hide Hunters Bird Shoot.*

CHAPTER VI

WE had come down to the rift valley by a sandy red road across a high plateau, then up and down through orchard-bushed hills, around a slope of forest to the top of the rift wall where we could look down and see the plain, the heavy forest below the wall, and the long, dried-up edged shine of Lake Manyara rose-colored at one end with a half million tiny dots that were flamingoes. From there the road dropped steeply along the face of the wall, down into the forest, onto the flatness of the valley, through cultivated patches of green corn, bananas, and trees I did not know the names of, walled thick with forest, past a Hindu's trading store and many huts, over two bridges where clear, fast-flowing streams ran, through more forest, thinning now to open glades, and into a dusty turn-off that led into a deeply rutted, dust-filled track through bushes to the shade of M'utu-Umbu camp.

That night after dinner we heard the flamingoes flighting in the dark. It was like the sound the wings of ducks make as they go over before it is light, but slower, with a steady beat, and multiplied a thousand times. Pop and I were a little drunk and P. O. M. was very tired. Karl was gloomy again. We had taken the edge from his victory over rhino and now that was past anyway and he was facing possible defeat by oryx. Then, too, they had found not a leopard but a marvellous lion, a huge, black-maned lion that did not want to leave, on the rhino carcass when they had gone there the next morning and could not shoot him because he was in some sort of forest reserve.

"That's rotten," I said and I tried to feel bad about it but I was still feeling much too good to appreciate any one else's gloom and Pop and I sat, tired through to our bones, drinking whiskey and soda and talking.

The next day we hunted oryx in the dried-up dustiness of the rift valley and finally found a herd way off at the edge of the wooded hills on the far side above a Masai village. They were like a bunch of Masai donkeys except for the beautiful straight-slanting black horns and all the heads looked good. When you looked closely two or three were obviously better than the others and sitting on the ground I picked what I thought was the very best of the lot and as they strung out I made sure of this one. I heard the bullet smack and watched the oryx circle out away from the others, the circle quickening, and knew I had it. So I did not shoot again.

This was the one Karl had picked, too. I did not know that, but had shot, deliberately selfish, to make sure of the best this time at least, but he got another good one and they went off in a wind-lifted cloud of gray dust as they galloped. Except for the miracle of their horns there was no more excitement in shooting them than if they had been donkeys and after the truck came up and M'Cola and Charo had skinned the heads out and cut up the meat we rode home in the blowing dust, our faces gray with it, and the valley one long heat mirage.

We stayed at that camp two days. We had to get some zebra hides that we had promised friends at home and it needed time for the skinner to handle them properly. Getting the zebra was no fun; the plain was dull, now that the grass had dried, hot and dusty after the hills, and the picture that remains is of sitting against an ant hill with, in the distance, a herd of zebra galloping in the gray heat haze, raising a dust, and on the yellow plain, the birds circling over a white patch there, another beyond, there a third, and looking back, the plume of dust of the truck coming with the skinners and the men to cut up the meat for the village. I did some bad shooting in the heat on a grant's gazelle that the volunteer skinners asked me to kill them for meat, wounding him in a running shot after missing him three or four times, and then fol-

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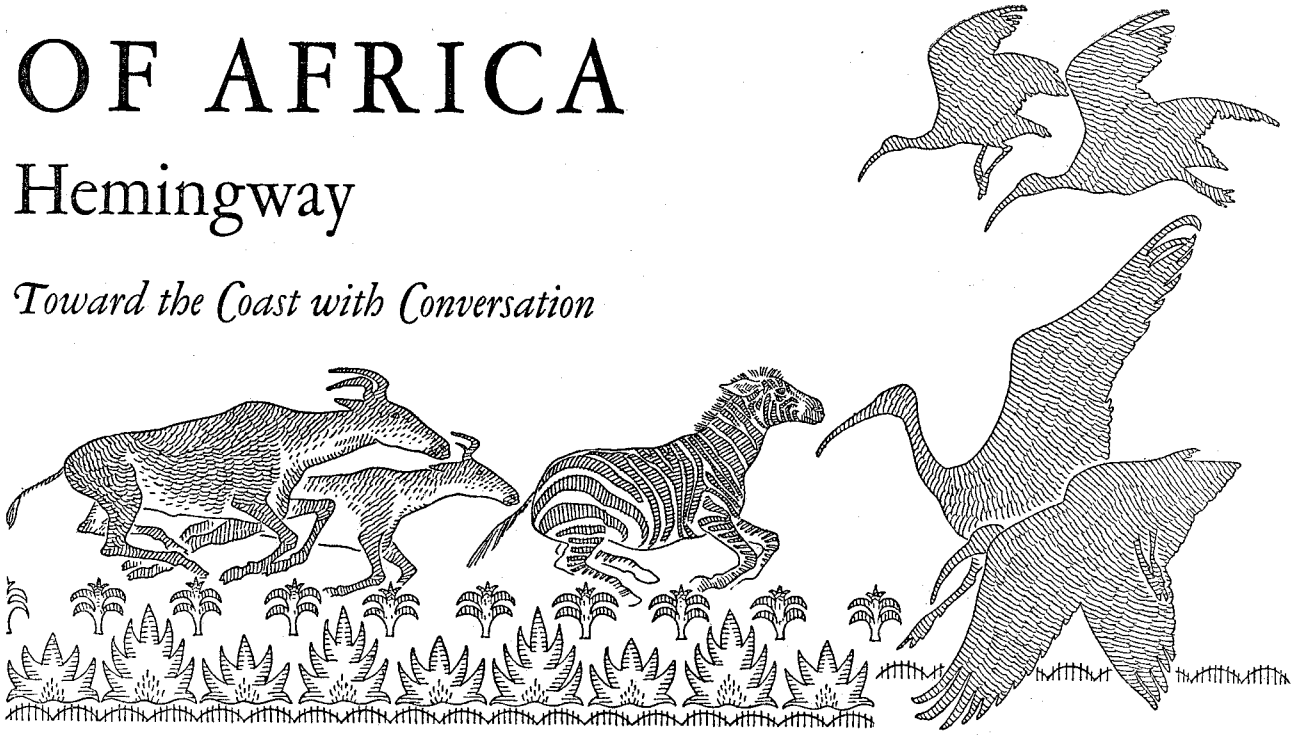
OF AFRICA

Hemingway

Toward the Coast with Conversation



lowing him across the plain until almost noon in that heat until I got within range and killed him.

But that afternoon we went out along the road that ran through the settlement and past the corner of the Hindu's general store, where he smiled at us in well-oiled, unsuccessful-storekeeping, brotherly humanity, and hopeful salesmanship, turned the car off to the left onto a track that went into the deep forest, a narrow brush-bordered track through the heavy timber, that crossed a stream on an unsound log and pole bridge and went on until the timber thinned and we came out into a grassy savannah that stretched ahead to the reed-edged, dried-up bed of the lake with, far beyond, the shine of the water and the rose-pink of the flamingoes. There were some grass huts of fishermen in the shade of the last trees and ahead the wind blew across the grass of the savannah and the dried bed of the lake showed a white-gray with many small animals humping across its baked surface as our car alarmed them. They were reed buck and they looked strange and awkward as they moved in the distance but trim and graceful as you saw them standing close. We turned the car out through the thick, short grass and onto the dried lake floor, and everywhere, to the left and to the right, where the streams flowed out into the lake and made a reedy marsh that ran down toward the receded lake, cut by canals of water, ducks were flying and we could see big flocks of geese spread over the grassy hummocks that rose above the marsh. The dried bed was hard and firm and we drove the car until it commenced to look moist and soft ahead, then left the motor car standing there, and, Karl taking Charo and I M'Cola to carry shells and birds, we agreed to work one one side and one the other of the marsh and try to shoot and keep the birds moving while Pop and P. O. M. went into the edge of the high reeds on the left shore of the lake where another stream made a thick marsh to which we thought the ducks might fly.

We saw them walk across the open, a big bulky figure in a faded corduroy coat and a very small one in trousers, gray khaki jacket, boots, and a big hat, and then disappear as they crouched in a point of dried reeds before we started. But as we went out to reach the edge of the stream we soon saw the plan was no good. Even watching carefully for the firmest footing you sunk down in the cool mud to the knees and, as it became less mucky and there were more hummocks broken by water, sometimes I went in to the waist. The ducks and geese flew up out of range and after the first flock had swung across toward where the others were hidden in the reeds and we heard the sharp, small, double report of P. O. M.'s 28-gauge and saw the ducks wheel off and go out toward the lake, the other scattered flocks and the geese all went out toward the open water. A flock of dark ibises, looking, with their dipped bills, like great curlews, flew over from the marsh on the side of the stream where Karl was and circled high above us before they went back into the reeds. All through the bog were snipe and black and white godwits and finally, not being able to get within range of the ducks, I began to shoot snipe to M'Cola's great disgust. We followed the marsh out and then I crossed another stream, shoulder high, holding my gun and shooting coat with shells in the pocket above my head and finally trying to work toward where P. O. M. and Pop were, found a deep flowing stream where teal were flying, and killed three. It was nearly dark now and I found Pop and P. O. M. on the far bank of this stream at the edge of the dried lake bed. It all looked too deep to wade and the bottom was soft but finally I found a heavily worn hippo trail that went into the stream and treading on this, the bottom fairly firm under foot, I made it, the water coming just under my armpits. As I came out on the grass and stood dripping a flock of teal came over very fast and, crouching to shoot

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in the dusk at the same time Pop did, we cut down three that fell hard in a long slant ahead in the tall grass. We hunted carefully and found them all. Their speed had carried them much farther than we expected and then, almost dark now, we started for the car across the gray dried mud of the lake bed, me soaked and my boots squashing water, P. O. M. pleased with the ducks, the first we'd had since the Serengetti, we all remembering how marvellous they were to eat, and ahead we could see the car looking very small and beyond it a stretch of flat, baked mud and then the grassy savannah and the forest.

Next day we came in from the zebra business gray and sweat-caked with dust that the car raised and the wind blew over us on the way home across the plain. P. O. M. and Pop had not gone out, there was nothing for them to do and no need for them to eat that dust, and Karl and I out on the plain in the too much sun and dust had gone through one of those rows that starts like this, "What was the matter?"

"They were too far."

"Not at the start."

"They were too far, I tell you."

"They get hard if you don't take them."

"You shoot them."

"I've got enough. We only want twelve hides altogether. You go ahead."

Then some one, angry, shooting too fast to show he was being asked to shoot too fast, getting up from behind the ant hill and turning away in disgust, walking toward his partner, who says, smugly, "What's the matter with them?"

"They're too damned far, I tell you," desperately.

The smug one, complacently, "Look at them."

The zebra that had galloped off had seen the approaching truck of the skinners and had circled and were standing now, broadside, in easy range.

The one looks, says nothing, too angry now to shoot. Then says, "Go ahead. Shoot."

The smug one, more righteous now than ever, refuses. "Go ahead," he says.

"I'm through," says the other. He knows he is too angry to shoot and he feels he has been tricked. Something is always tricking him, the need to do things other than in a regular order, or by an inexact command in which details are not specified, or to have to do it in front of people, or to be hurried.

"We've got eleven," says smug face, sorry now. He knows he should not hurry him, that he should leave him alone, that he only upsets him by trying to speed him up, and that he has been a smugly righteous bastard again. "We can pick up the other one any time. Come on, Bo, we'll go in."

"No, let's get him. You get him."

"No, let's go in."

And as the car comes up and you ride in through the dust the bitterness goes and there is only the feeling of shortness of time again.

"What you thinking about now?" you ask. "What a son of a bitch I am, still?"

"About this afternoon," he says and grins, making wrinkles in the caked dust on his face.

"Me too," you say.

Finally the afternoon comes and you start.

This time you wear canvas ankle-high boots, light to pull out when you sink, you work out from hummock to hummock, picking a way across the marsh and wade and flounder through the canals and the ducks fly as before out to the lake, but you make a long circle to the right and come out into the lake itself and find the bottom hard and firm and walking knee deep in the water get outside the big flocks, then there is a shot and you and M'Cola crouch, heads bent, and then the air is full of them, and you cut down two, then two again, and then a high one straight overhead, then miss a fast one straight and low to the right, then they come whistling back, passing faster than you can load and shoot, you brown a bunch to get cripples for decoys and then take only fancy shots because you know now you can get all that we can use or carry. You try the high one, straight overhead and almost leaning backward, the *coup de roi,* and splash a big black duck down beside M'Cola, him laughing, then, the four cripples swimming away, you decide you better kill them and pick up. You have to run in water to your knees to get in range of the last cripple and you slip and go face down and are sitting, enjoying being completely wet finally, water cool on your behind, soaked with muddy water, wiping off glasses and then getting the water out of the gun, wondering if you can shoot up the shells before they will swell, M'Cola delighted with the spill. He, with the shooting coat now full of ducks, crouches and a flock of geese pass over in easy range while you try to pump a wet shell in. You get a shell in, shoot, but it is too far, or you were behind, and at the shot you see the cloud of flamingoes rise in the sun, making the whole horizon of the lake pink. Then they settle. But after that each time after you shoot you turn and look out into the sun on the water and see that quick rise of the unbelievable cloud and then the slow settling.

"'Cola," you say and point.

"N'Dio," he says, watching them. "M'uzuri!" and hands you more shells.

We all had good shooting but it was best out on the lake and for three days afterward, travelling, we had cold teal, the best of ducks to eat, fine, plump, and tender, cold with Pan-Yan pickles, and the red wine we bought at Babati sitting by the road waiting for the trucks to come up, sitting on the shady porch of the little hotel at Babati, then late at night when the trucks finally came in and we were at the house of an absent friend of a friend, high up in the hills, cold at night, wearing coats at the table, having waited so long for the broken-down truck to come that we all drank much too much and were unspeakably hungry, P. O. M. dancing with the manager of the coffee shamba, and with Karl, to the gramophone, me shot full of emetine and with a ringing headache drowning it successfully in whiskey-soda with Pop on the porch, it dark and the wind blowing a gale, and then those teal coming on the table, smoking hot and with fresh vegetables. Guinea hen were all right, and I had one now in the lunch box in the back of the car that I would eat tonight; but those teal were the finest of all.

From Babati we had driven through the hills to the edge of a plain, wooded in a long stretch of glade beyond a small village where there was a mission station at the foot of a mountain. Here we had made a camp to hunt kudu which were supposed to be in the wooded hills and in the forest on the flats that stretched out to the edge of the open plain.

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CHAPTER VII

NO KUDU AND THE UNSEEN LION. UNDER WAY AGAIN

It was a hot place to camp, under trees that had been girdled to kill them so that the tse-tse fly would leave, and there was hard hunting in the hills, which were steep, brushy, and very broken, with a hard climb before you got up into them, and easy hunting on the wooded flats where you wandered as though through a deer park. But everywhere were tse-tse flies, swarming around you, biting hard on your neck, through your shirt, on arms and behind the ears. I carried a leafy branch and swished away at the back of my neck as we walked and we hunted five days, from daylight until dark, coming home after dark, dead tired but glad of the coolness and of the darkness that stopped the tse-tse from biting. We took turns hunting the hills and the flats and Karl became steadily gloomier although he killed a very fine roan antelope. He had gotten a very complicated personal feeling about kudu and, as always when he was confused, it was some one's fault, the guides, the choice of beat, the hills; these [illegible] betrayed him. The hills punished him and he did not believe in the flats. Each day I hoped he would get one and that the atmosphere would clear but each day his feelings about the kudu complicated the hunting. He was never a climber and took real punishment in the hills. I tried to take the bulk of the hill beats to relieve him but I could see, now that he was tired he felt they probably *were* in the hills and he was missing his chance.

In the five days I saw a dozen or more kudu cows and one young bull with a string of cows. The cows were big, gray, striped-flanked antelope with ridiculously small heads, big ears, and a soft, fast-rushing gait that moved them in big-bellied panic through the trees. The young bull had the start of a spiral on his horns but they were short and dumpy and as he ran past us at the end of a glade in the dusk, third in a string of six cows, he was no more like a real bull than a spike elk is like a big, old, thick-necked, dark-maned, wonder-horned, tawny-hided, beer-horse-built bugler of a bull-elk.

Another time, headed home as the

sun went down along a steep valley in the hills, the guides pointed to two gray, white-striped, moving animals, against the sun at the top of the hill, showing only their flanks through the trunks of the trees and said they were kudu bulls. We could not see the horns and when we got up to the top of the hill the sun was gone and on the rocky ground we could not find their tracks. But from the glimpse we had they looked higher in the legs than the cows we saw and they might have been bulls. We hunted the ridges until dark but never saw them again nor did Karl find them the next day when we sent him there.

We jumped many water buck and once, still hunting along a ridge with a steep gully below, we came on a water buck that had heard us, but not scented us, and as we stood, perfectly quiet, M'Cola holding his hand on mine, we watched him, only a dozen feet away, standing, beautiful, dark, full-necked, a dark ruff on his neck, his horns up, trembling all over as his nostrils widened searching for the scent. M'Cola was grinning, pressing his fingers tight on my wrist, and we watched the big buck shiver from the danger that he could not locate. Then there was the distant, heavy boom of a native black powder gun and the buck jumped and almost ran over us as he crashed up the ridge.

Another day, with P. O. M. along, we had hunted all through the timbered flat and come out to the edge of the plain where there were only clumps of bush and sanseviera when we heard a deep, throaty, cough. I looked at M'Cola.

"Simba," he said and did not look pleased.

"Wapi?" I whispered. "Where?"

He pointed.

I whispered to P. O. M., "It's a lion. Probably the one we heard early this morning. You go back to those trees."

We had heard a lion roaring just before daylight when we were getting up.

"I'd rather stay with you."

"It wouldn't be fair to Pop," I said. "You wait back there."

"All right. But you *will* be careful."

"I won't take anything but a standing shot and I won't shoot unless I'm sure of him."

"All right."

"Come on," I said to M'Cola.

He looked very grave and did not like it at all.

"Wapi simba?" I whispered.

"Here," he said dismally and pointed at the broken islands of thick, green spiky cover. I motioned to one of the guides to go back with P. O. M. and we watched them go back a couple of hundred yards to the edge of the forest.

"Come on," I said. M'Cola shook his head without smiling but followed. We went forward very slowly, looking into, and trying to see through, the sanseviera. We could see nothing. Then we heard the cough again, a little ahead and to the right.

"Nol" M'Cola whispered. *"Hapana,* B'wana!"

"Come on," I said. I pointed my forefinger into my neck and wriggled the thumb down. "Kufa," I whispered, meaning that I would shoot the bastard in the neck and kill him dead. M'Cola shook his head, his face dead grave and sweating. "Hapana!" he whispered.

There was an ant hill ahead and we climbed the furrowed clay and from the top looked all around. We could not make out anything in the green cactus-like cover. I had believed we might see him from the ant hill and after we came down we went on for about two hundred yards into the broken cactus. Once again we heard him cough ahead of us and once, a little farther on, we heard a growl. It was very deep and very impressive.

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Since the ant heap my heart had not been in it. Until that had failed I had believed I might have a close and good shot and I knew that if I could kill one alone, without Pop along, I would feel good about it for a long time. I had made up my mind absolutely not to shoot unless I knew I could kill him. I had killed three and I knew what it consisted in, but I was getting more excitement from this one than the whole trip. I felt it was perfectly fair to Pop to take it on as long as I had a chance to call the shot but what we were getting into now was bad. He kept moving away as we came on, but slowly. Evidently he did not want to move, having fed, probably, when we had heard him roaring in the early morning, and he wanted to settle down now. M'Cola hated it. How much of it was the responsibility he felt for me to Pop and how much was his own acute feeling of misery about dangerous game I did not know. But he felt very miserable. Finally he put his hand on my shoulder, put his face almost into mine and shook his head violently three times.

"Hapana! Hapana! Hapana! B'wana!" he protested, sorrowed, and pled.

After all, I had no business taking him where I could not call the shot and it was a profound personal relief to turn back.

"All right," I said. We turned around and came back out the same way we had gone in, then crossed the open prairie to the trees where P. O. M. was waiting.

"Did you see him?"

"No," I told her. "We heard him three or four times."

"Weren't you frightened?"

"At the last," I said. "But I'd rather have shot him in there than any damned thing in the world."

"My, I'm glad you're back," she said. I got the dictionary out of my pocket and made a sentence in pigeon Swahili. "Like" was the word I wanted.

"M'Cola like simba?"

M'Cola could grin again now and the smile moved the Chinese hairs at the corner of his mouth.

"Hapana," he said and waved his hand in front of his face. "Hapana!"

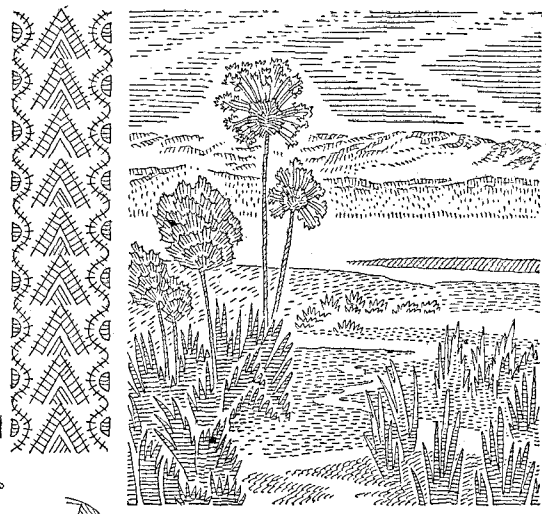
"Hapana" is a negative.

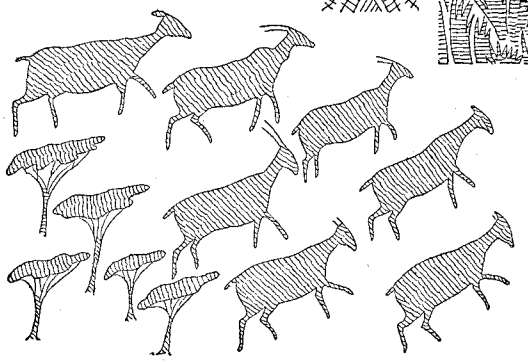
"Shoot a kudu?" I suggested.

"Good," said M'Cola feelingly in Swahili. "Better. Best. Tendalla, yes. Tendalla."

But we never saw a kudu bull out of that camp and we left two days later to go into Babati and then down to Kondoa and strike across country toward Handeni and the coast.

I never liked that camp, nor the guides, nor the country. It had that picked-over, shot-out feeling. We knew there were kudu there and the Prince of Wales had killed his kudu





from that camp, but there had been three other parties in that season, the natives were hunting, supposedly defending their crops from baboons, but on meeting a native with a brass-bound musket it seemed odd that he should follow the baboons ten miles away from his shamba up into the kudu hills to have a shot at them, and I was all for pulling out and trying the new country toward Handeni where none of us had ever been.

"Let's go then," Pop said.

It seemed this new country was a gift. Kudu came out into the open and you sat and waited for the more enormous ones and selecting a suitable head, blasted him over. Then there were sable and we agreed that whoever killed the first kudu should move on into the sable country. I was beginning to feel awfully good and Karl was very cheerful at the prospect of this new miraculous country where they were so unsophisticated that it was really a shame to topple them over.

We left, soon after daylight, ahead of the outfit, who were to strike camp and follow in the two lorries. We stopped in Babati at the little hotel overlooking the lake and bought some more Pan-Yan pickles and had some cold beer. Then we started south on the Cape to Cairo road, here well graded, smooth, and carefully cut through wooded hills overlooking the long yellow stretch of plains of the Masai Steppes, down and through farming country, where the dried-breasted old women and the shrunken-flanked, hollow-ribbed old men hoed in the corn fields, through miles and dusty miles of this, and then into a valley of sun-baked, eroded land where the soil was blowing away in clouds as you looked, into the tree-shaded, pretty, whitewashed, German, model-garrison town of Kandoa-Irangi.

We left M'Cola at the crossroads to hold up our lorries when they came, put the car into some shade and visited the military cemetery. We intended to call on the D. O. but they were at lunch, and we did not want to bother them, so after the military cemetery which was a pleasant, clean, well-kept place and as good as another to be dead in, we had some beer under a tree in shade that seemed liquid cool after the white glare of a sun that you could feel the weight of on your neck and shoulders, started the car and went out to the crossroads to pick up the lorries and head to the east into the new country.

CHAPTER VIII

TOWARD THE COAST WITH CONVERSATION. FIRST VIEW OF GARRICK. THE BITTERNESS ABOUT THE SALT

It was a new country to us but it had the marks of the oldest countries. The road was a track over shelves of solid

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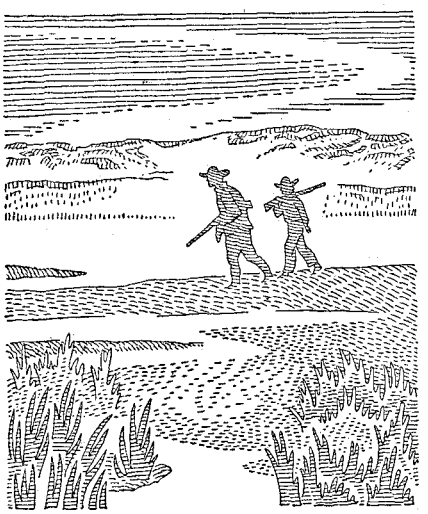
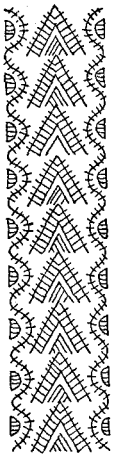
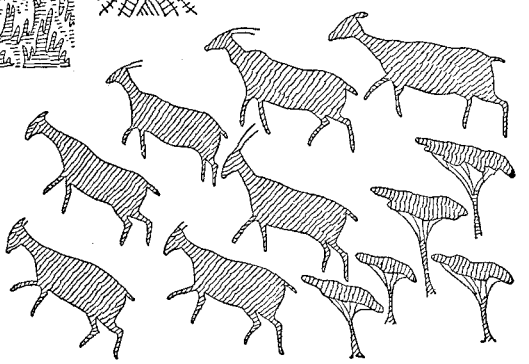




rock, worn by the feet of the caravans and the cattle, and it rose in boulder-strewn unroadliness through a double line of trees and into the hills. The country was so much like Aragon that I could not believe that we were not in Spain until, instead of mules with saddle bags, we met a dozen natives bare-legged and bare-headed dressed in white cotton cloth they wore gathered over the shoulder like a toga; but when they were past, the high trees beside the track over those rocks was Spain and I had followed this same route forced on ahead and following close behind a horse one time watching the horror of the flies scuttling around his crupper. They were the same camel flies we found here on the lions. If one got inside your shirt you had to get the shirt off to kill him. He'd go inside the neckband, down the back, around and under one arm, make for the navel and the belly band, and if you did not get him he would move with such intelligence and speed that, scuttling flatly and uncrushable he would make you undress completely to kill him.

That day of watching the camel flies working under the horse's tail, having had them myself, gave me more horror than anything I could remember except one time in a hospital with my right arm broken off short between the elbow and the shoulder, the back of the hand having hung down against my back, the points of the bone having cut up the flesh of the biceps until it finally rotted, swelled, burst, and sloughed off in pus. Alone with the pain in the night in the fifth week of not sleeping I thought suddenly how a bull elk must feel if you break a shoulder and he gets away and in that night I lay and felt it all, the whole thing as it would happen from the shock of the bullet to the end of the business and, being a little out of my head, thought perhaps



what I was going through was a punishment for all hunters. Then, getting well, decided if it was a punishment I had paid it and at least I knew what I was doing. I did nothing that had not been done to me. I had been shot and I had been crippled and gotten away. I expected, always, to be killed by one thing or another and I, truly, did not mind that any more. Since I still loved to hunt I resolved that I would only shoot as long as I could kill cleanly and as soon as I lost that ability I would stop. If you serve time for society, democracy, and the other things quite young, and declining any further enlistment make yourself responsible only to yourself, you exchange the pleasant, comforting stench of comrades for something you can never feel in any other way than by yourself. That something I cannot yet define completely but the feeling comes when you write well and truly of something and know impersonally you have written in that way and those who are paid to read it and report on it do not like the subject so they say it is all a fake, yet you know its value absolutely; or when you do something which people do not consider a serious occupation and yet you know, truly, that it is as important and has always been as important as all the things that are in fashion, and when, on the sea, you are alone with it and know that this Gulf Stream you are living with, knowing, learning about, and loving, has moved, as it moves, since before man, and that it has gone by the shoreline of that long, beautiful, unhappy Island since before Columbus sighted it and that the things you find out about it, and those that have always lived in it are permanent and of value because that stream will flow, as it has flowed, after the Indians, after the Spaniards, after the British, after the Americans and after all the Cubans and all the systems of governments, the richness, the poverty, the martyrdom, the sacrifice and the venality and the cruelty are all gone as the high-piled scow of garbage, bright-colored, white-flecked, ill-smelling, now tilted on its side, spills off its load into the blue water, turning it a pale green to a depth of four or five fathoms as the load spreads across the surface, that sinkable part going down and the flotsam of palm fronds, corks, bottles, and used electric light globes, seasoned with an occasional fishskin or a deep floating corset, the torn leaves of a student's exercise book, a well-inflated dog, the occasional rat, the no-longer-distinguished cat; all this well shepherded by the boats of the garbage pickers who pluck their prizes with long poles, as interested, as intelligent, and as accurate as historians; they have the viewpoint; the stream, with no visible flow, takes five loads of this a day when things are going well in La Habana and in ten miles along the coast it is as clear and blue and unimpressed as it was ever before the tug hauled out the scow; and the palm fronds of our victories, the worn light bulbs of our discoveries and the empty rubber of our great loves float with no significance against one single, lasting thing—the stream.

So, in the front seat, thinking of the sea and of the country, in a little while we ran out of Aragon and down to the bank of a sand river, half a mile wide, of golden-colored sand, shored by green trees and broken by islands of timber and in this river the water is underneath the sand and the game comes down at night and digs in the sand with sharp-pointed hoofs and water flows in and they drink. We crossed this river and by now it was getting to be afternoon and we passed

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many people on the road who were leaving the country ahead where there was a famine and there were small trees and close brush now beside the road and then it commenced to climb and we came into some blue hills, old, worn, wooded hills with trees like beeches and clusters of huts with fire smoking and cattle home driven, flocks of sheep and goats and patches of corn and I said to P. O. M. "It's like Galicia."

"Exactly," she said. "We've been through three provinces of Spain today."

"Is it really?" Pop asked.

"There's no bloody difference," I said. "Only the buildings. It was like Navarre in Droopy's country too. The limestone outcropping in the same way, the way the land lies, the trees along the watercourses and the springs."

"It's damned strange how you can love a country," Pop said.

"You two are very profound fellows," P. O. M. said. "But where are we going to camp?"

"Here," said Pop. "As well as any place. We'll just find some water."

We camped under some trees near three big wells where native women came for water and, after drawing lots for location, Karl and I started off with our gunbearers and a local native apiece to hunt in the dusk around two of the hills across the road above the native village.

"It's all kudu country," Pop said. "You're liable to jump one anywhere."

But we saw nothing but some Masai cattle in the timber and came home, in the dark, glad of the walk after a day in the car, to find camp up, Pop and P. O. M. in pyjamas by the fire, and Karl not yet in.

He came in, furious for some reason, no kudu possibly, pale, and gaunt looking and speaking to nobody.

Later, at the fire, he asked me where we had gone and I said we had hunted around our hill until our guide had heard them; then cut up to the top of the hill, down, and across country to camp.

"What do you mean, heard us?"

"He said he heard you. So did M'Cola."

"I thought we drew lots for where we would hunt."

"We did," I said. "But we didn't know we had gotten around to your side until we heard you."

"Did *you* hear us?"

"I heard something," I said. "And when I put my hand up to my ear to listen the guide said something to M'Cola and M'Cola said, 'B'wana.' I said, 'What B'wana?' and he said, 'B'wana Kabor.' That's you. So we figured we'd come to our limit and went up to the top and came back."

He said nothing and looked very angry.

"Don't get sore about it," I said.

"I'm not sore. I'm tired," he said. I could believe it because of all people no one can be gentler, more understanding, nor more self-sacrificing, than Karl, but the kudu had become an obsession to him and he was not himself, nor anything like himself.

"He better get one pretty quick," P. O. M. said when he had gone in to his tent to bathe.

"Did you cut in on his country?" Pop asked me.

"Hell, no," I said.

"He'll get one where we're going," Pop said. "He'll probably get a fifty-incher."

"All the better," I said. "But by God, I want to get one too."

"You will, Old Timer," Pop said. "I haven't a thought but what you will."

"What the hell. We've got ten days."

"We'll get sable too, you'll see. Once our luck starts to run."

"How long have you ever had them hunt them in a good country?"

"Three weeks and leave without seeing one. And I've had them get them the first half day. It's still hunting, the way you hunt a big buck at home."

"I love it," I said. "But I don't want that guy to beat me. Pop, he's got the best buff, the best rhino, the best waterbuck——"

"You beat him on oryx," Pop said.

"What's an oryx?"

"He'll look damned handsome when you get him home."

"I'm just kidding."

"You beat him on impalla, on eland. You've a first-rate bushbuck. Your leopard's as good as his. But he'll beat you on anything where there's luck. He's got damned wonderful luck and he's a good lad. I think he's off his feed a little."

"You know how fond I am of him. I like him as well as I like any one. But I want to see him have a good time. It's no fun to hunt if we get that way about it."

"You'll see. He'll get a kudu at this next camp and he'll be on top of the wave."

"I'm just a crabby bastard," I said.

"Of course you are," said Pop. "But why not have a drink?"

"Right," I said.

Karl came out, quiet, friendly, gentle, and understandingly delicate.

"It will be fine when we get to that new country," he said.

"It will be swell," I said.

"Tell me what it's like, Mr. Phillips," he said to Pop.

"I don't know," said Pop. "But they say it's very pleasant hunting. They're supposed to feed right out in the open. That old Dutchman claims there are some remarkable heads."

"I hope you get a sixty-incher, kid," Karl said to me.

"You'll get a sixty-incher."

"No," said Karl. "Don't kid me. I'll be happy with any kudu."

"You'll probably get a hell of a one," Pop said.

"Don't kid me," Karl said. "I know how lucky I've been. I would be happy with any kudu. Any bull at all."

He was very gentle and he could tell what was in your mind, forgive you for it, and understand it.

"Good old Karl," I said, warmed with whiskey, understanding, and sentiment.

"We're having a swell time, aren't we?" Karl said. "Where's poor old Mama?"

"I'm here," said P. O. M. from the shadow. "I'm one of those quiet people."

"By God if you're not," Pop said. "But you can puncture the old man quick enough when he gets started."

"That's what makes a woman a universal favorite," P. O. M. told him. "Give me another compliment, Mr. J. P."

"By God, you're brave as a little terrier." Pop and I had both been drinking, it seemed.

"That's lovely," P. O. M. sat far back in her chair, holding her hands clasped around her mosquito boots. I looked at her, seeing her quilted blue robe in the firelight now, and the light on her black hair. "I love it when you all reach

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the little terrier stage. Then I know the war can't be far away. Were either of you gentlemen in the war by any chance?"

"Were we not," said Pop. "A couple of the bravest bastards that ever lived and your husband's an extraordinary wing shot and an excellent tracker."

"Now he's drunk, we get the truth," I said.

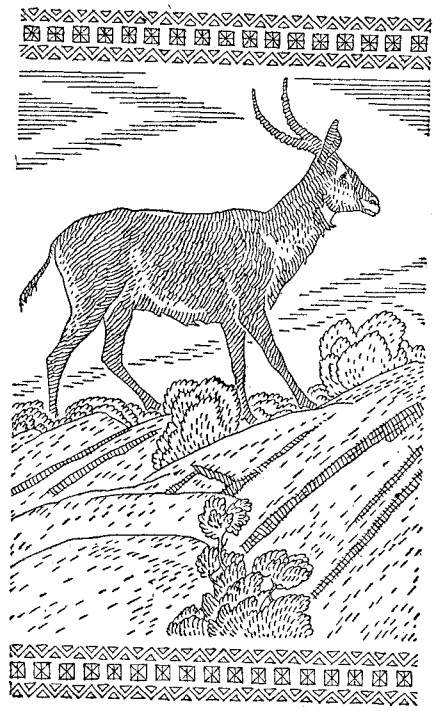
"Let's eat," said P. O. M. "I'm really frightfully hungry."

We were out in the car at daylight, out onto the road and beyond the village and, passing through a stretch of heavy bush, we came to the edge of a plain, still misty before the sunrise, where we could see, a long way off, eland feeding, looking huge and gray in the early morning light. We stopped the car at the edge of the bush and getting out and sitting down with the glasses saw there was a herd of kongoni scattered between us and the eland, and with the kongoni a single bull oryx, like a fat, plum-colored, Masai donkey with marvellous long, black, straight, back-slanting horns that showed each time he lifted his head from feeding.

"You want to go after him?" I asked Karl.

"No. You go on."

I knew he hated to make a stalk and to shoot in front of people and so I said, "All right." Also I wanted to shoot, selfishly, and Karl was unselfish. We wanted meat badly. I walked along the road, not looking toward the game, trying to look casual, holding the rifle slung straight up and down from the left shoulder away from the game. They seemed to pay no attention but fed away steadily. I knew that if I moved toward them they would at once move off out of range so, when from the tail of my eye I saw the oryx drop his head to feed again, and, the shot looking possible, I sat down, slipped my arm through the sling and as he looked up and started to move off, quartering away, I held for the top of his back and squeezed off. You do not hear the noise of the shot on game but the slap of the bullet sounded as he started running across and to the right, the whole plain backgrounding into moving animals against the rise of the sun, the rocking-horse canter of the long-legged, grotesque kongoni, the heavy swinging trot into gallop of the eland,



and another oryx I had not seen before running with the kongoni. This sudden life and panic all made background for the one I wanted, now trotting, three-quartering away, his horns held high now and I stood to shoot running, got on him, the whole animal miniatured in the aperture and I held above his shoulders, swung ahead and squeezed and he was down, kicking, before the crack of the bullet striking bone came back. It was a very long and even more lucky shot that broke a hind leg.

I ran toward him, then slowed to walk up carefully, in order not to be blown if he jumped and ran; but he was down for good. He had gone down so suddenly and the bullet had made such a crack as it landed that I was afraid I had hit him on the horns but when I reached him he was dead from the first shot behind the shoulders high up in the back and I saw it was cutting the leg from under him that brought him down. They all came up and Charo stuck him to make him legal meat.

"Where did you hold on him the second time?" Karl asked.

"Nowhere. A touch above and quite a way ahead and swung with him."

"It was very pretty," Dan said.

"By evening," Pop said, "he'll tell us that he broke that off leg on purpose. That's one of his favorite shots, you know. Did you ever hear him explain it?"

While M'Cola was skinning the head out and Charo was butchering out the meat, a long, thin Masai with a spear came up, said good morning, and stood, on one leg, watching the skinning. He spoke to me at some length and I called to Pop. The Masai repeated it to Pop.

"He wants to know if you are going to shoot something else," Pop said. "He would like some hides but he doesn't care about oryx hide. It is almost worthless, he says. He wonders if you would like to shoot a couple of kongoni or an eland. He likes those hides."

"Tell him on our way back."

Pop told him solemnly. The Masai shook my hand.

"Tell him he can always find me around Harry's New York Bar," I said.

The Masai said something else and scratched one leg with the other.

"He says why did you shoot him twice?" Pop asked.

"Tell him in the morning in our tribe we always shoot them twice. Later in the day we shoot them once. In the evening we are often half shot ourselves. Tell him he can always find me at the New Stanley or at Torr's."

"He says what do you do with the horns?"

"Tell him in our tribe we give the horns to our wealthiest friends. Tell him it is very exciting and sometimes members of the tribe are chased across vast spaces with empty pistols. Tell him he can find me in the book."

Pop told the Masai something and we shook hands again, parting on a most excellent basis. Looking across the plain through the mist we could see some other Masai coming along the road; earth-brown skins, and knee-ing forward stride and spears thin in the morning light.

Back in the car, the oryx head wrapped in a burlap sack, the meat tied inside the mudguards, the blood drying, the meat dusting over, the road of red sand now, the plain gone, the bush again close to the edge of the road, we came up into some hills and through the little village of Kibaya where there was a white rest house and a general store and much farming land. It was here Dan had sat on a haystack one time waiting for a kudu to feed out into the edge of a patch of mealy-corn and a lion had stalked Dan while he sat and nearly gotten him. This gave us a

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strong historical feeling for the village of Kibaya and as it was still cool and the sun had not yet burned off the dew from the grass I suggested we drink a bottle of that silver-paper-necked, yellow-and-black-labelled German beer with the horseman in armor on it in order that we might remember the place better and even appreciate it more. This done, full of historical admiration for Kibaya, we learned the road was possible ahead, left word for the lorries to follow on to the eastward and headed on toward the coast and the kudu country.

For a long time, while the sun rose and the day became hot, we drove through what Pop had described, when I asked him what the country was like to the south, as a million miles of bloody Africa, bush close to the road that was impenetrable, solid, scrubby-looking undergrowth.

"There are very big elephant in there," Pop said. "But it's impossible to hunt them. That's why they're very big. Simple, isn't it?"

After a long stretch of the million-mile country, the country began to open out into dry, sandy, bush-bordered prairies that dried into a typical desert country with occasional patches of bush where there was water, that Pop said was like the northern frontier province of Kenya. We watched for gerenuk, that long-necked antelope that resembles a praying mantis in its way of carrying itself, and for the lesser kudu that we knew lived in this desert bush, but the sun was high now and we saw nothing. Finally the road began to lift gradually into the hills again, low, blue, wooded hills now, with miles of sparse bush, a little thicker than orchard bush, between, and ahead a pair of high, heavy, timbered hills that were big enough to be mountains. These were on each side of the road and as we climbed in the car where the red road narrowed there was a herd of hundreds of cattle ahead being driven down to the coast by Somali cattle buyers, the principal buyer walked ahead, tall, good-looking in white turban and coast clothing, carrying an umbrella as a symbol of authority. We worked the car through the herd, finally, and coming out wound our way through pleasant-looking bush, up and out into the open between the two mountains and on, a half a mile, to a mud and thatched village in the open clearing on a little low plateau beyond the two mountains. Looking back, the mountains looked very fine with timber up their slopes, out-croppings of limestone and open glades and meadows above the timber.

"Is this the place?"

"Yes," said Dan. "We will find where the camping place is."

A very old, worn, and faded black man, with a stubble of white beard, a farmer, dressed in a dirty once-white cloth gathered at the shoulder in the manner of a Roman toga, came out from behind one of the mud and wattle huts, and guided us back down the road and off it to the left to a very good camp site. He was a very discouraged-looking old man and after Pop and Dan had talked with him he went off, seeming more discouraged than before, to bring some guides whose names Dan had written on a piece of paper as being recommended by a Dutch hunter who had been here a year ago and who was Dan's great friend.

We took the seats out of the car to use as a table and benches and spreading our coats to sit on had a lunch in the deep shade of a big tree, drank some beer, and slept or read while we waited for the lorries to come up. Before the lorries arrived the old man came back with the skinniest, hungriest, most unsuccessful-looking of Wanderobos who stood on one leg, scratched the back of his neck and carried a bow and quiver of arrows and a spear. Queried as to whether this was the guide whose name we had, the old man admitted he was not and went off, more discouraged than ever, to get the official guides.

When we woke next the old man was standing with the two official and highly clothed in khaki guides and two others, quite naked, from the village. There was a long palaver and the head one of the two khaki-panted guides showed his credentials, a To Whom It May Concern stating the bearer knew the country well and was a reliable boy and capable tracker. This was signed by so and so, professional hunter. The khaki-clothed guide referred to this professional hunter as B'wana Simba and the name infuriated us all.

"Some bloke that killed a lion once," Pop said.

"Tell him I am B'wana Fisi, the hyena slaughterer," I told Dan. "B'wana Fisi chokes them with his naked hands."

Dan was telling them something else.

"Ask them if they would like to meet B'wana Hop-Toad, the inventor of the hoptoads and Mama Tziggi, who owns all these locusts."

Dan ignored this. It seemed they were discussing money. After ascertaining their customary daily wage, Pop told them if either of us killed a kudu the guide would receive fifteen shillings.

"You mean a pound," said the leading guide.

"They seem to know what they're up to," Pop said. "I must say I don't care for this sportsman in spite of what B'wana Simba says."

B'wana Simba, by the way, we later found out to be an excellent hunter with a wonderful reputation on the coast.

"We'll put them into two lots and you draw for them," Pop suggested. "One naked one and one with breeches in each lot. I'm all for the naked savage, myself, as a guide."

On suggesting to the two testimonial-equipped, breeched guides that they select an unclothed partner, we found this would not work out. Loud Mouth, the financial and, now, theatrical, genius who was giving a gesture by gesture reproduction of How B'wana Simba Killed His Last Kudu interrupted it long enough to state he would only hunt with Abdullah. Abdullah, the short, thick-nosed, educated one, was His Tracker. They always hunted together. He himself did not track. He resumed the pantomime of B'wana Simba and another character known as B'wana Doktor and the horned beasts.

"We'll take the two savages as one lot and these two Oxonians as the other," Pop said.

"I *hate* that theatrical bastard," I said.

"He may be marvellous," Pop said doubtfully. "Anyway, you're a tracker, you know. The old man says the other two are good."

"Thank you. Go to hell. Will you hold the straws?"

Pop arranged two grass stems in his fist. "The long one is David Garrick and his pal," he explained. "The short one is the two nudist sportsmen."

"Do you want to draw first?"

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"Go ahead," Karl said.

I drew David Garrick and Abdullah.

"I've got the bloody tragedian."

"He may be very good," Karl said.

"Do you want to trade?"

"No. He may be a marvel."

"Now we'll draw for choice of beats. The long straw gets first choice," Pop explained.

"Go ahead and draw."

Karl drew the short one.

"What are the beats?" I asked Pop.

There was a long conversation in which our David simulated the killing of half a dozen kudu from different types of ambush, surprise, stalks in the open, and jumping them in the bush.

Finally Pop said, "It seems there's some sort of a salt lick where they come to lick salt and thousands are slain. Then sometimes you just stroll around the hill there and pot the poor buggars in the open. If you're feeling frightfully fit, you climb for them and up in the crags you knock them over as they stroll out to feed."

"I'll take the salt lick."

"Mind you only shoot the very biggest sort," Pop said.

"When do we start?" Karl asked.

"The salt lick is supposed to be an early morning show," Pop told us. "But Old Hem might as well have a look at it tonight. It's about five miles down the road before you start to walk. He'll start first and take the car. You can start back in the hills any time after the sun gets a little farther down."

"What about the Memsahib?" I asked. "Should she go with me?"

"I don't think it's advisable," Pop said seriously. "The fewer people when you're after kudu the better."

M'Cola, Theatre Business, Abdullah, and I came back that evening late in the cool of the night and full of excitement as we came up to the fire. The dust of the salt lick had been cut up and printed deep with fresh kudu tracks and there were several big bull tracks. The blind made a marvellous ambush and I was as confident and as sure of a shot at kudu the next morning as I would be sure of a shot at ducks from a good blind, with a fine stock of decoys out, cold weather, and the certainty of a flight on.

"It's airtight. It's foolproof. It's even a shame. What's his name Booth, Barrett, McCullough—you know who I mean——"

"Charles Laughton," said Pop, pulling on his pipe.

"That's the one. Fred Astaire. Society's hoofer and the world's. He's an ace. Found the blind and everything. Knew where the salt lick was. Could tell which way the wind blew by simply scattering dust. He's a marvel. B'wana Simba trains 'em, pal. Pop, we have them in the container. It's only a question of not spoiling the meat and selecting the more rugged specimens. I'll kill you two tomorrow on that lick. Citizens, I feel very well."

"What *have* you been drinking?"

"Not a damned thing, really. Call Garrick. Tell him I'll put him in the cinema. Got a part for him. Little thing I thought up on the way home. It may not work out but I like the plot. Othello or The Moor of Venice. D'you like it? It's got a wonderful idea. You see this jig we call Othello falls in love with this girl who's never been around at all so we call her Desdemona. Like it? They've been after me to write it for years but I drew the color line. Let him go out and get a reputation, I told them. Harry Wills, hell. Paulino beat him. Sharkey beat him. Dempsey beat Sharkey. Carnera knocked him out. What if nobody saw the punch? Where the hell were we, Pop? Harry Greb is dead you know."

"We were just coming into Town," Pop said. "Chaps were throwing things at you and we couldn't find out why."

"I remember," P. O. M. said. "Why didn't you make him draw the color line, Mr. J. P.?"

"I was frightfully tired," Pop said.

"You're very distinguished looking, though," P. O. M. said. "What are we going to do with this goofy?"

"Throw a drink into the brute and see if he'll quiet down."

"I'm quiet now," I said. "But by God I feel awfully good about tomorrow."

Just then who should come into camp but old Karl with his two naked savages and his half-size, very devout Mohammedan gun bearer, Charo. In the firelight old Karl looked a grayish, yellowish white in the face and he took off his Stetson.

"Well, did you get one?" he asked.

"No. But they're there. What did you do?"

"Walked along a god-damned road. How do they expect to find kudu along a road with nothing but cattle and huts and people?"

He did not look like himself and I thought he must be ill. But coming in like a death's head when we had been clowning made me behave badly again and I said, "We drew lots, you know."

"Of course," he said bitterly. "We hunted along a road. What would you expect to see? Does that seem the way to hunt kudu to you?"

"But you'll get one on the salt lick in the morning," P. O. M. told him very cheerfully.

I drank off the glass of whiskey and soda and heard my voice say very cheerfully, "You'll be sure to get one on the salt lick in the morning."

"You're hunting it in the morning," Karl said.

"No. You're hunting it. I had it tonight. We're changing off. That's been understood. Isn't it, Pop?"

"Quite," Pop said. No one was looking at any one else.

"Have a whiskey and soda, Karl," P. O. M. said.

"All right," Karl said.

We had one of those quiet meals. In bed in the tent, I said, "What in God's name prompted you to say that about him having the lick in the morning?"

"I don't know. I don't think that's what I meant to say. I got mixed up. Let's not talk about it."

"I won the damned thing drawing lots. You can't go against lots. That's the only way the luck has a chance to even up, ever."

"Don't let's talk about it."

"I don't think he's well now and he doesn't feel himself. The damned things have gotten his goat and he's liable to blow that salt lick higher than a kite in the state he's in."

"Please stop talking about it."

"I will."

"Good."

"Well, we made him feel good anyway."

"I don't know that we did. Please stop talking about it."

"I will."

"Good."

"Good night," she said.

"The hell with it," I said. "Good night."

"Good night."

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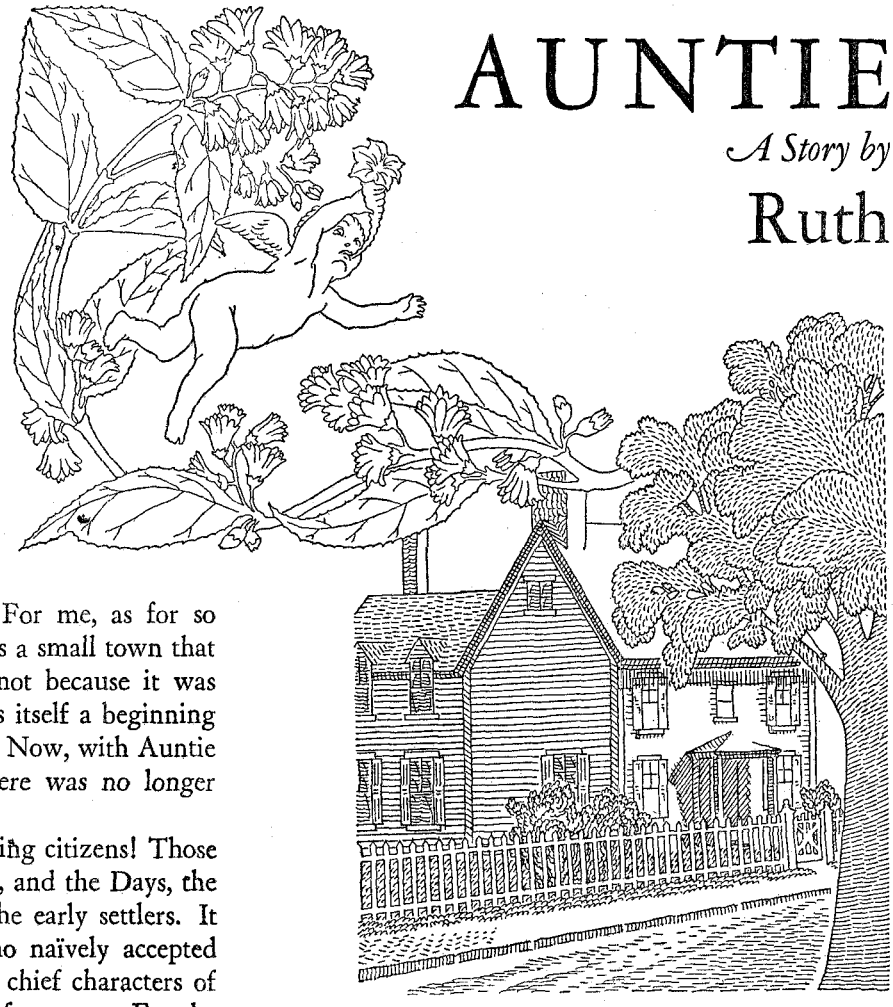
AUNTIE

A Story by

Ruth



When I was out in California I had a letter from one of my mother's old friends telling me: "You must look up Auntie Bissel."

That was the first I had heard that Auntie Bissel had become a Californian. In fact, I hadn't heard anything of Auntie Bissel for years, not since word had come of Uncle Harvey's death. It was so impossible to think of one of them without the other, that I believe I must have taken it for granted that when Uncle Harvey had died, Auntie Bissel had just stopped living too.

And I believe that I now felt a little resentful to find she hadn't! For me, as for so many nomadic Americans, there was a small town that lived on in my memory, beloved not because it was lovely, but because—although it was itself a beginning—I looked back upon it as complete. Now, with Auntie Bissel and Uncle Harvey gone, there was no longer any Woodside.

Not that the Bissels were the leading citizens! Those were the Robinsons, the Boardmans, and the Days, the New England families who were the early settlers. It was probably only we children who naïvely accepted Auntie Bissel and Uncle Harvey as chief characters of the town. Still, we were not so very far wrong. For the Bissels, of mixed, somewhat miscellaneous, origin—and far more than Mrs. Robinson with her meticulous speech, than Mr. Day with his bleak banker's face—had that strong, that almost rank quality of the characteristic which gave the little town itself its essential claim upon memory. Uncle Harvey—he had a rosy Santa Claus face, a little mustache that we used to tug, saying "Ding, ding, two fares!"—was the station agent. They had a house of the regulation kind, with an L. Church suppers, lodges—both of them were deep in the folks activities of the town.

The house! Regulation, I called it. But that is oh far too mild a term for the rich rank aura of the commonplace brought to a climax in its interior. A recital of Auntie Bissel's tastes would read like a catalog of the period. It is needless to say that nothing went unadorned: that the piano top draped askew was loaded with photographs set on miniature fancy easels—babies predominating, and naked preferred; that the chamber pots nestled in pink tasseled covers; that big red roses were embroidered on brown crash cushions; and noble heads of Indian maidens were framed in burnt wood tinted in dim sour reds and greens. The whole house was thick with curtains and jingly portières. And among these, the pug dog of that era, smelly as well as snorty, led its over-stuffed life, yelping if disturbed at its slumbers. Woodside should have kept the house as a museum in which all the bad taste of that flourishing period was enshrined in convincing unselfconsciousness, to produce what Auntie Bissel called "a homey atmosphere."

But it was immaculate. The house smelled of fresh biscuits— yes, even more than of dog. Fresh biscuits with the rich butter melting in little golden runlets—chocolate cakes, golden-brown fried chicken, perfect coffee—these delicious things were as characteristic of Auntie Bissel's as the mass of little rugs always getting in the way when one tried to shut a door.

Need I add that children flocked there?—drawn by the biscuits, the candy Uncle Harvey kept in crumpled striped paper sacks? Auntie Bissel curled our hair, tied sashes around our waists, and gave us fans. She doused our sailor collars with perfume—we always came away from Auntie Bissel's over-fed and stepping high and sniffing our reeking carnation aroma in an ecstasy of self-appreciation.

Auntie Bissel, like Mrs. Judge Robinson, had "lost a

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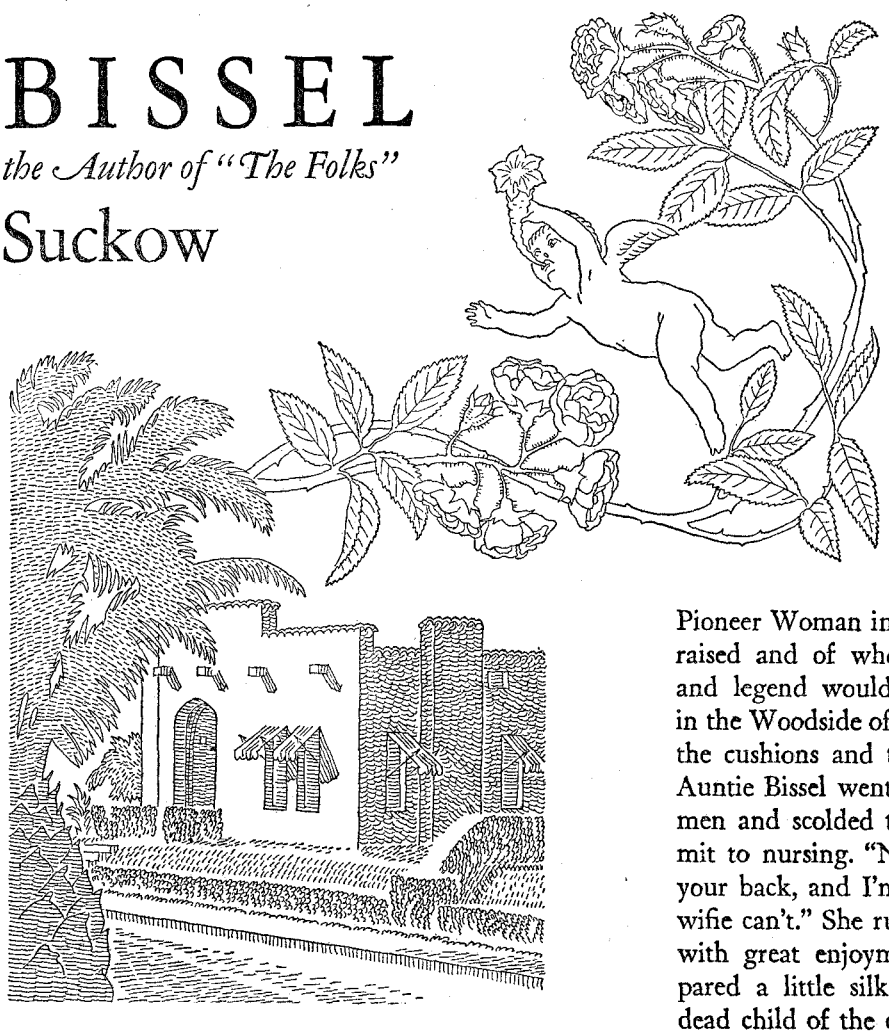
BISSEL

the Author of "The Folks"

Suckow



little girl." That awesome phrase made us afraid to go to Mrs. Robinson's. But we never thought of being afraid of Auntie Bissel's Gracie. She was as real to us as our own little friends, and almost as much alive. We named dolls Gracie. We stared with admiration at her picture, the eyes tinted blue and the cheeks shell-pink, set under a bubble of glass in a golden frame that culminated in the most beautiful of curley-cues. We wanted to know just what kind of cloth her little blue dress was made of, and had a feeling of the most ineffable softness when told that it was "albatross." When we asked where Gracie was now, Auntie Bissel replied that she "had fallen asleep." There was a stricken look in Uncle Harvey's eyes. On Decoration Day, we could see with awe that he had been crying. But Auntie Bissel was at the Armory then, wrapping the stems of great wet snowballs in crackly tinfoil. Her pale blue eyes were overflowing, but she was the busiest worker there—"in her element," people would say, "she's just in her element"—getting a kind of dramatic enjoyment even from the sad memory of having lost a loved one.

No doubt it was after Gracie's death that both of them assumed their community titles of Uncle and Auntie. But we children never heard them refer to each other by any other terms. "You go out and see what Auntie Bissel's got in the kitchen," Uncle Harvey would say. And Auntie Bissel would say, "You little girlies run and tell Uncle Harvey Auntie says it's time for him to come wash his hands." It was not only to us children, though, that Auntie Bissel and Uncle Harvey were so integral a part of that early-century Woodside, the town couldn't have been imagined without them. Auntie Bissel wasn't the simple stalwart Pioneer Woman in the sunbonnet to whom statues are raised and of whom legends are made. Both statue and legend would have been far more rococo! But in the Woodside of the early nineteen hundreds, among the cushions and the souvenirs, she fulfilled her part. Auntie Bissel went into the sickrooms of obstreperous men and scolded them for being too priggish to submit to nursing. "Now look here, I've got you flat on your back, and I'm going to make you mind even if wifie can't." She rubbed rheumatic limbs, gave enemas with great enjoyment, coddled the ancient. She prepared a little silk dress with lace trimming for the dead child of the colored washerwoman—that was the only colored family in Woodside; and shared the consolation the family obviously drew from their pride. It was a common saying in Woodside:

"How could this town get along without the Bissels!"

So I think I may be allowed a touch of rueful disappointment to find that Auntie Bissel was still living and yet not there.

The memory of the house with the L was so close around me that I couldn't believe in this semi-Spanish house with its blue door: an imposing house in the southern California manner. I rang the bell with misgivings.

It wasn't Auntie Bissel who came. It was a rather tall lady, gray-haired, refined, to whom the semi-tropical setting seemed not very much more appropriate than to Auntie Bissel herself. She said yes, she would call "Mrs. Bissel"; and gave me a smile that left me with an impression of the brave, humble fortitude of a spinster.

I was left to wait in the living room. Auntie Bissel's living room!—this spacious Californian place, with the modern furniture interspersed with antiques, and the arched front window giving dramatically, between

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parted blue curtains, a view of palm trees looking gray and prehistoric in the fog. I could see almost nothing to suggest the old homey atmosphere—not, that is, until I heard a snort, a thump, and a very ugly, overfed Boston terrier came running to me on bow legs and thrust up its head with pleading but petted dark eyes goggling at me. I was engaged with its vociferous calls for attention when Auntie Bissel came into the room.

At first my mouth went open in a gasp. She was more than ever plump—"fleshy" was her word; and she had bloomed in keeping with her new fortunes, whatever they might be. I had seen that phenomenon in other elderly ladies transplanted to a place beneath this magic sun. But Auntie Bissel! "A very heavy head of hair" had been her pride, and the great coil known as "Auntie Bissel's topknot" had seemed as much of a landmark in Woodside as the water tower. Now the hair was bobbed, bobbed and grandly frizzled, and no slogan of "dignity for the older woman" had interfered with Auntie Bissel's new coiffure. The ends glistened in bright gold, but the top had dwindled back to silver ("to keep company with Alice," I was later informed—Alice was an old stickler). She came forward in considerable clatter of bracelets and beads, a fine new color on her cheeks, a welcoming smile on her poppy-red lips. But with the lavish clasp of her fat arms, all was again familiar, I knew her through the poppy and the gold. I forgave her for having survived Uncle Harvey, for disrupting my memory of Woodside, and felt a moisture mildly responding to the easy overflowing of tears in those blue eyes protuberant with good living.

"My, my, my! When Alice told me I had a lady visitor, I never supposed—! I'll have to have another squeeze. One of my own little girlies and all grown up!" She wiped her eyes. "I expect you find *me* pretty changed too."

"Well—a little."

"I suppose Tillie gave you a real welcome. Her's a great little welcomer, so her is."

Tillie the Toiler was the dog's name—just the kind of dog that forms the model for that litter of "garden ornaments" on the lawns of houses marked "TOURISTS" in full accordance with Auntie Bissel's taste; and I was amused and pleased to hear Auntie Bissel, as she offered her face with relish for an overjoyed licking, term herself the little doggum's not mama, but Auntie. I was going to speak of the pug in Woodside—how, like all pugs, she seemed to have been modernized into a Boston terrier. But I was afraid of bringing up the subject of the old home, of Uncle Harvey, of all she had lost.

Auntie Bissel wasn't afraid. She began to talk in a flood.

"I want to hear all about you. And where's that hubby of yours? I want to see *him*."

She would see him. He was going to stop for me. No sooner said than Auntie Bissel had it settled that—no matter what the size of the Sunday dinner we had enjoyed—we were both to stay for "a little pick-up lunch."

But she was forgetting that she had a cake in the oven! (I had been aware of a good smell from somewhere mingling with the ancient flatness of the ocean fog.) She was going to take me right out with her. She guessed I had been in her kitchen before.

I had been in Auntie Bissel's kitchen, but not in this one! It was as gleamingly up-to-date in porcelain and curtains appliqued with bright oranges as the picture of a model room from a household magazine.

"What do you think of my little kitchen?" Auntie Bissel asked with naïve contentment. "The old gentleman, bless his heart, let me fix it up just exactly as I pleased. It's the kind I'd always set my heart on having some day."

Just as some might have thought of Auntie Bissel's old house as a home of tragedy, after the loss of Gracie, so they might have looked upon her now as a lonely old woman bereft of all. But not if they had seen her in this kitchen!—seen her heated and bustling, calling my attention happily to all its new rinctums and devices, with the smell of the chocolate cake which finally came luscious out of the beautiful enamelled oven.

"The little girlie next door is having a birthday, so I said I'd see to it she had a cake. The mama's busy, you know—and they've lived around a good deal. Well, I'm still at my old tricks," Auntie Bissel finished with happy complacency.

I still didn't know just how she had come here. Or who "the old gentleman" was. Or the lady who had given me the smile. Uncle Harvey's modest little estate could scarcely have provided this house. Auntie Bissel was at first too busy to explain, although she kept making breathless promises and references. Oh, she had so much to tell me! She couldn't begin to get it told today. She got side-tracked from her own history, however, and launched with adoring relish upon the story of the children for whom she was making the cake. This dear little tot who was having the birthday was just the cutest little piece you ever saw! Her folks were out here trying to get her into the movies. And my, when she did get in, she'd back some of these grown-up stars right off the screen! "Oh, I just do think kiddies are so *cunnin'* in pictures. These are all show children—the whole little bunch. And are they smart!" Now, although I wanted to hear about Auntie herself, I sat contented with the old busy sense of things going on—warily licking a spoonful of frosting, for I knew what the pick-up lunch would be. As I looked at

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Auntie Bissel, shining with a contented effulgence, her cheeks now flushed purple under the bright stationary pink, it seemed to me that she was really more in her element than she had ever been!

When the cake was frosted and put to cool, and we were back in the living room, Auntie Bissel did launch herself upon her personal history. And although it was interspersed with, almost motivated by, deaths—at mention of each of which her eyes overflowed—I could see that she took the same dramatic consolation in them as in the memory of her early great loss. I don't know that Auntie Bissel's faith was deeper than that of others. In fact, I am sure it wasn't. She went to church, but she was more of a goer than a believer. Yet the phrase "passed on" seemed now to render her a mystic consolation, like the old one of "fallen asleep."

"Of course you knew when Uncle Harvey passed on. I remember the lovely letter your folks wrote me. I just didn't know what ever I was going to do! But right then came word that my brother's wife had passed on too, and that he wanted me to come out here and look after them all. It really was queer how it happened. I'd always been hoping to make the trip to California, and this came just at the right time. The only thing was that Uncle Harvey didn't get to come. We'd always looked forward to the trip some day. But then, you can't have *every*thing right."

She had kept house for her brother for a while, until he had taken it into his head to marry again. "But men need to be married. They can't get along." And then there was this old gentleman whose wife had passed away—it was "away" for the wife, not "on!"—and he needed some one to look after him and his house. "So just when I needed it, the right thing turned up again! I said when Uncle Harvey was taken, and things looked pretty black, that what all of us need is trust that everything's coming out all right. It's the way we think about things, that's what's important." Of course, in some ways it had been hard. The children, Auntie Bissel said mysteriously, had made trouble. "But I knew the old gentleman needed me, and what had they ever done for him, and I wasn't going to step out for them no matter what awful things they tried to spread around. As if that poor old gentleman! —well, anyway." Auntie Bissel wiped her eyes. "When he passed on, there was an awful fuss. But they couldn't prove he wasn't in his right mind—righter than any of *them* had ever been!" There was a look of ease about Auntie Bissel now, like one who is provided for. That was the only phrase she would use. "Provided for." But I was to infer that the old gentleman had left her the house. And then, when it looked as if she was going to be lonesome, all by herself in this big place, Alice's mother had passed on—"And I believe the poor girl would have given up herself if I hadn't made her come in with me." Alice—she was the lady who had let me in—was not, as I had thought she might be, one of the Day girls from Woodside now appropriately "making her home" with Auntie Bissel. No, she was from Ohio, and had been a librarian, but the mother's health had failed, and they had come out here. But Auntie Bissel couldn't have loved her more if she had been her own daughter. In some ways, it seemed as if Alice was just what Gracie might have been.

"It all goes to show you never can tell, can you?" Auntie Bissel said with her air of discovery. "You just have to trust. So now I have this lovely place, and my little kitchen, everything just the way I want it, and all the wonderful things around me—and Alice to keep me from getting lonesome—yes and Tillie, Auntie won't go forgetting *her*."

There was a clamor at the doorbell.

"Oh, my little sweetheartums has come after her birf'-day cake! Auntie Bissel's got it all ready. All ready and waiting, and now come in and show the nice lady what a sweet little bunch of kiddies Auntie Bissel has now. This lady used to be one of Auntie Bissel's little girl-ies. Think of that!" They didn't seem to think much. "Just the same as this little honey-bun is now."

Oh no, not the same! That could be only politeness on Auntie Bissel's part. If the kitchen, crammed with the latest do-dads, rejoiced Auntie Bissel's soul, these children were the perfect embodiment of the ideal she was feebly trying for with the means at hand when she used to comb out and curl the braided hair of the little girls in Woodside and send them home reeking with perfumery. Auntie Bissel introduced the children with gloating pride.

"Now, isn't *this* a cunnin' bunch? Did you ever see such a head of curls in your life? And you don't know how smart they are! They can dance, and sing, and all kinds of things. Pretty soon they're going to show us. Aren't they?"

But no one could have missed the fact that these were "show children." Already they were well broken in to performance. They had the peculiarly large blob faces, the redundancy of fat cheeks and dimples and curls, the bold too-knowing gaze of a flock of movie comedy tots. Every trait known as "childish" was developed and displayed to the uttermost, until childishness itself was lost. They were the personification of the idea (if it can be called such) behind the creation of those over-blown pink celluloid dolls which Auntie Bissel loved to suspend above dresser tops by green ribbons.

But "the little girl who was having the birthday" held center. Auntie Bissel hugged her in proud delight. Here was the doll in life. If she had been a doll, dressed and manufactured to Auntie Bissel's order, she couldn't have fitted the rôle so well. Everything answered the dream—the ruffled dress showing the

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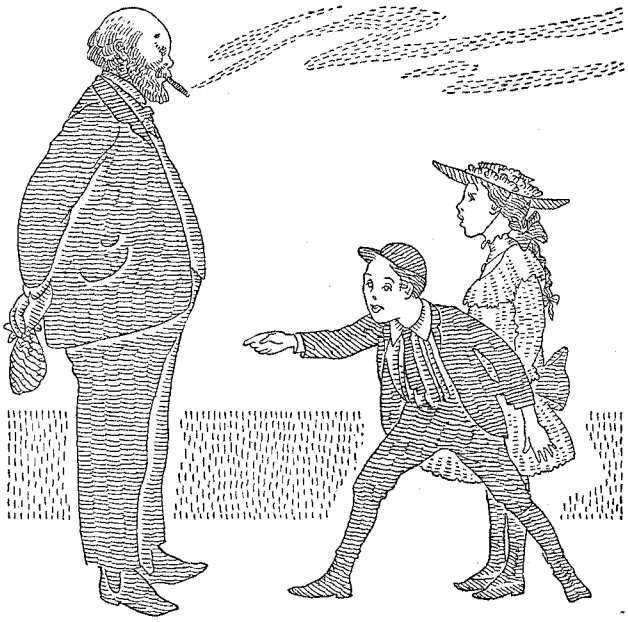

dimpled arms; the pink ribbon around the curls; the fat face; the dear little shiny slippers; the cute bold stare ("*she* wasn't afraid of strangers, no siree, not afraid of anything.") Auntie Bissel showed off all these points with doting pride, taking special delight in the "birf'day gift" coolly displayed, a real little grown-up lady's compact.

"Let Auntie and the lady see. Oh, isn't that just too lovely! Little powder, and puffie, and rouge, and lip-stick, just like a grown-up movie star! Shall Auntie put some on her? *Now* show the kiddies. Show the lady. Doesn't she look beautiful?"

The child whirled and pouted at me with her bright-red Cupid's bow. My heart sank as I realized that here stood the fulfillment of Auntie Bissel's fondest dream —a sublimation, in truth—as even Gracie could never have fulfilled it. (But the easy mist had gathered in her eyes, meaning "This is just the way Gracie would have looked.") Never had I felt the goofy Santa Claus dream quality of this West Coast heaven conjured up for Auntie Bissel and her kind, as at this moment, gazing upon Auntie Bissel's sublimation! The children had attained a gaudier bloom than Auntie herself. Even the smallest of them was overblown. In the famous words of the picture magnate they were all "colossal—in a small way."

But now they must do their stuff. They snapped into their acts with blasé speed and put them through with alert, adult timing. The little birthday girl came first. Holding out her ruffles, she postured and pointed at her audience in silver screen glee. I could see her re-uniting the parted movie parents in the grand embrace of the final reel. I could see her piteous weeping because her mommie had gone to heaven. But now the lady would like to hear some singing, wouldn't she? A boy with long locks combed back from a broad Jackie Coogan countenance was not at all backward about favoring the lady. Striking an easy man-of-the-world posture, and fixing upon me a deliberately melting eye, he left no doubt that he was singing straight to my heart. I listened with the horrid conviction that here before me stood that incredible child who brightly answered the nightly questions about the virtues of a laxative in response to the melodiously cultivated voice of a gentleman on the radio—whom I had been regarding, and still did, as the most obnoxious infant on the earth.

And yet over the whole small vulgar display there hovered something pathetic, disarming—how can I name it? All was glowing in the happy light of Auntie Bissel's pure naïveté. The children snapped out of their act as smoothly as they had gone into it. Their departure with the cake was appropriately boisterous. The broad face of the radio youth became suddenly boyish with wholesome greed. Auntie Bissel beamed with gratification. And she was Auntie Bissel still.

Now that hubby of mine did come, and he had to stay. But I knew that Auntie Bissel's pick-up lunch would be reward enough. In the meal itself there was a kind of sublimation. Here were the fruits of the earth, all bigger and better, and roses from her own garden in February. Tillie sat in turn at all our feet with eyes goggling. (I could see from Alice's sweet, pained smile that for Auntie Bissel's sake she forebore to draw away her ladylike skirts.) My husband nearly foundered trying to live up to Auntie Bissel's ideal of a man's appetite. Her eyes were moist as she repeated happily how good it was to have a man at the table again!

But now that Auntie Bissel had found me, she wasn't going to lose me again. I hadn't begun to see anything! Before we left, I had promised to make a real visit. I found later that I was looking forward to it in a particular way—as if it might let me into occult social mysteries, like peeking into the old lodge room and seeing Auntie Bissel dressed up in her secret regalia.

When my husband took a trip with pack horses, I came to stay at Auntie Bissel's.

This *was* Auntie Bissel's now. The room I was given had evidently belonged to the old gentleman's régime, like the living room; but as soon as I had taken off my wraps, Auntie Bissel begged me to come into her own little nest, where we could be so much more comfy. Here the earlier dignity had become charged with Auntie Bissel's homey atmosphere. Cushions were three deep, there were dolls, pictures cut from magazines, curtains tied back with perky bows, an art department bed spread. Although the things were new,

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I recognized them as the logical modern substitutes for the old Woodside souvenirs, just as Tillie had logically supplanted the pug. There was only one thing that was really familiar.

"You remember *this*," Auntie Bissel said.

She pointed to the wall above her bed, where the picture of Gracie, now faded and dimmed, hung in its tarnished golden frame beneath the heavy bubble of glass. In her blue albatross, with her innocent eyes beneath home-cut bangs, Gracie seemed like some little forgotten ancestress, rather than Auntie Bissel's own child.

With solemnity, her eyes overflowing, Auntie Bissel brought me Uncle Harvey's last photograph. The hair was silvered, the little mustache was gone, but his smile was still there, willing if faint—and now I could see truly that deeply stricken look in his kindly eyes. But as always with Auntie Bissel herself, the sense of survival was stronger than the sense of loss.

When Alice came home, the time had flown so, it had to be another pick-up lunch. Auntie Bissel said that she and Alice and I were going to have just the best old time! That was what she loved here—always something to see, somewhere to go—a person could be on the go every minute! Wouldn't Uncle Harvey have loved it? Of that I wasn't so sure. I thought Uncle Harvey had loved the depot, keeping track of the trains by name—the Morning Mail, the Flyer, the Way-Freight—talking with conductors and brakemen on cold winter days when they came into the station to get warmed up, joking with children when he made out half-fare tickets and pretending they were cheating and were really grown folks. But Auntie Bissel had found *her* place, no doubt of that.

I felt it more and more, as she showed me "everything!" In the garden, it was the size of the flowers that she loved more than the flowers themselves. The fact that they were blooming when they shouldn't have been blooming was ever new to her childlike wonder. It answered her combined belief and disbelief in miracles. Even the goldfish in the little pool, like all members of the animal kingdom cherished by Auntie Bissel, looked heartily over-stuffed. But the live goldfish, the love birds in their colored cage, Tillie running bowlegged and butting down the paths, these were not enough—no, Auntie Bissel must set up besides, to fill her garden, sticks bearing birds' heads, artificial toads, one of those dreadful Tillie models, wearing a red bow, and glaring at a spitting, red-bowed cat.

The bathroom!—if that wasn't typically Auntie Bissel's!—the full-blown outcome of the old commode with the flowered chamber set, the pink-tasseled husher, the marbled soap. But in the midst of the mitts, and mats and brushes, the soap in the form of ducks and

dolls, I had to smile at the chaste, modest reticence of Alice's two plain immaculate towels and her one small bar of pure castile soap.

I wondered at first about this union of Auntie Bissel and Alice. Alice was spare, although not thin. She had the peculiar, almost codfish paleness of the less vital type of New Englander. I could see, by her deprecating smile at Auntie Bissel's raptures, that Alice felt herself "cultured" in much the same way as the Robinson girls. She subscribed to a book club, hung a print of the Sistine Madonna above her bed, went to lectures and travel talks, and cherished the pictures of her pioneer great-grandparents in small dark walnut frames. But Alice explained to me—in her cool, maidenly bower, where she had taken me for confidences—that Auntie Bissel was "so good." Auntie Bissel by now, and by bits—as she stirred things on the stove, or pressed a dress for Alice (her morning greeting always was, "Now if you girlies have any pressing bring it out—and if you have any little things to wash out, I can just as well do it for you while my hands are in water")—had related a considerable part of Alice's history. I could well see that Alice did, as Auntie Bissel said, want petting. It was she who had given it before, since her mother, and not she, had been a mother—that seemed the reasoning. Since Alice's dear little mother was a mother, and Alice only a daughter, Alice was always to *be* a daughter, and never a mother—and since she wasn't a mother, and so couldn't "know," she must forever make up to her poor little mother for being the mother and she the daughter. I expect that Alice too, since she was living with Auntie Bissel, had come into some belated filial paradise of which she hadn't even dared have dreams. Alice was so thoroughly a New Englander become Middle-west-

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erner, and yet a Californian as well—pale but living, as if the blood running thin had been replenished by a kind of elixir, colorless and flat as water, curiously active, and curiously insipid—like the air of the Pacific beaches, so strangely drained of the heavy sea-smells of the Atlantic coast.

I came to realize, on this visit, that Alice and Auntie Bissel, leaving what might be called their respective Woodsides and coming to the land of eternal sunshine, both had reached the last stand of their tribe and race. They had come into its final flowering, whether real or unreal none could say. Everything seemed to have some quality of a fantastic yet concrete dream. Auntie Bissel took me to a famous theater, to see, made immortal in cement, the fabulously tiny "footprints of the stars"—and these stars themselves were all that Auntie Bissel had ever dreamed womankind could be. She saw Gracie in every synthetic golden head. I remembered how Auntie Bissel had always loved to "go to the show." And here was the show reduced to terms of ordinary living raised to terms of the show! The orange juice stands that were huge oranges, the lemonade stands that were lemons—all was pictured out and made concrete for her delighted naïveté. This was *her* coast of Bohemia, where, if she chose, she could be on the go all day long. And all of it had that curiously unreal and fabulous quality—sometimes it was truly as if we were walking on air. These roses that had been conjured from the desert might have vanished under one light tap from some monstrous wand. There was a sense of trembling transiency in the fairyland glimmer of the evening lights beyond Auntie Bissel's theatrical front window. Here she dwelt in ingenuous delight, she and her tribe—in the midst of marvels so lately created, so complacently accepted—and those who had owned the desert before this fairy tale began were "foreigners." Auntie Bissel had all the scareheads—the Reds, the Foreigners, the Yellow Peril, all who seemed to threaten the complacent blandness of her paradise. Yet she had a feeling of magic security in the midst of this transiency that came to seem to me the most fabulous thing of all.

"Oh, this is such a lovely story!" Auntie Bissel would voluptuously sigh over those continued stories she used to save for "shut-ins." "The author just had me wondering for a while, so many things happened, but in the end it all came out all right."

All things worked to convince me that Auntie Bissel herself was dwelling in her own happy ending, regarding it with contented wonder as both a natural consequence and a miracle. For in spite of missing Uncle Harvey, of wanting a man at the table—as she told me day by day—Auntie Bissel now found herself in her ideal situation. Auntie Bissel was a Woodside Worthy Matron. No need to convince me that the children of the old gentlemen were wrong in those dreadful things they said! It was not for the allurement of the old gentleman that she had cut off her topknot and gilded her hair. It was only to please herself. The strain of the Puritan in her blood ran lusty but colorless. She mourned the old gentleman, but when he had died, she had reached her goal. Yes, now, enshrined in a last photograph in a fancy frame, she really had Uncle Harvey where she wanted him. She was happier without a man.

Of course, as Auntie Bissel and Alice proudly complained, they couldn't begin to show me everything. But although they differed in regard to the finest sights, there was one on which they were truly united. That was the Mausoleum.

But to see the Mausoleum was an event that couldn't be simply decided upon and undertaken some afternoon, as we would have "gone out to look at the cemetery" in Woodside. A day must be solemnly chosen, reservations made in advance. There were gardens, playgrounds, statues, lakes; and two sweet little churches: in the one celebrated weddings, in the other celebrated funerals, were held—the weddings and the funerals of "the stars." At an appointed hour, we were to sit and look our fill of the "exact reproduction" of the most famous sacred painting in the world, which was enshrined in the center of this glorious resting-place of the fortunate passers-on from Auntie Bissel's earthly paradise.

The day itself seemed charged with a mixture of worshipful solemnity and bland radiance. It was one of those truly golden California days, roses blooming, streets, and houses bright in an air of eternal mild festival. Alice had asked for the afternoon off, and we set out in the not-quite-new sedan, Alice, with her pale vitality, driving and driving well. Both were dressed for the holiday, Alice wearing a picture hat she would certainly have thought too daring in Ohio, and Auntie Bissel perfumed and rouged with a kind of showy comeliness. Their sprightliness was like an effervescence of the fruit juices and health foods on which they lived. In spite of—I might almost say, because of!—the fact that we were visiting a Mausoleum, we three set off in high festivity.

For when we entered the grounds, I felt that we were indeed entering the final scene of the great American fairy tale with its resolutely happy ending. The place spread out before us from the top of a hill where we had paused for a bird's-eye view—acres and acres, in a weird combination of a "new development" and a sanctuary for what was outmoded and past. Here the melodrama of the journalists who love to place "the great events of birth and death" in heightened contrast,

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was given full expression—all rendered both gruesome and innocuous in the peculiar bland empty brightness of the sunshine. There were famous burying grounds elsewhere in America. There was Plymouth, there was Gettysburg. Burying grounds in fact had marked the progress of the pioneers from whom both Auntie Bissel and Alice proudly traced descent. But other meager minds had conceived of these as resting-places merely. Here that elementary purpose was draped in all the ribbons and roses of grandiose fancy with which I had always suspected that Auntie Bissel was able to adorn the passing on of her loved ones. In spite of the melodramatic emphasis, we were not allowed long to mourn.

The place might have been designed so that the tastes both of Auntie Bissel and Alice would receive complete satisfaction. I thought of that as they showed me its wonders. There was the homey atmosphere that Auntie Bissel loved; but homey in the grand manner. Alice called my attention with satisfied awe to the statues which, powder-white with newness, were all "perfect replicas," and thus to her colonial wistfulness represented the acme of the "cultured." That journalistic flair for melodrama had certainly designed the two little churches, perfect replicas too, with names as redolently quaint as those of the winding roads in new residential sections—the one so theatrically devoted to marriage, the other to burial. The knowledge that the "wee little" church was "a restoration" made it beautiful in Alice's eyes; that it was a setting for the weddings of "the stars" filled Auntie Bissel with delight.

But now the hour of our appointment was at hand. Silence fell upon us as we approached the Mausoleum itself. In this great white building the modernistic latest and the exact reproductions were mingled in æsthetics gone mad. I felt again that we were walking on air. At the very door we were met with a symbol of that eternal youth and invulnerable happiness that were Auntie Bissel's religion. Here in these contemporary catacombs, the ancient gloomy symbols had been fittingly replaced by the statue of a child, a cunnin', fat and smiling tot, for which the model might have been one of Auntie Bissel's own magazine darlings. She had to pause for raptures; to wipe a tear from her eye, but with a beatific smile on her face, as she remembered Gracie.

We went with hushed tread to the seats where we might gaze with unobstructed, well-planned-for awe upon the reproduction of the masterpiece. My thoughts wildly wandered. I noted Alice's uplifted look; with the irreverent conviction that she enjoyed this "perfect replica" far more than she ever could the somewhat age-worn original, which I felt sure, in its very age and authenticity, would have disappointed and repelled her. Auntie Bissel sat in restrained discomfort, subduing a tendency to the wiggles, that solemnly bogus reverence upon her face with which she might have felt it necessary to listen to "classical music"—to her all music was "classical music" which was not in the popular rhythms of the moment.

When a long and sufficient time had been allotted to our gazing, we got up, Auntie Bissel with obvious relief. There was still much to be seen—more than we ever *could* see, Auntie Bissel whispered with her old satisfaction in lavishness. I felt an awe as great as theirs, if differently directed, as I accompanied them through this ultimate sanctuary. This was the happy ending wrought in marble and gold. Again there was that most curious mixture of an exalted worship of the ancient, and the business-like and efficient up-to-date aspect. For while the ashes of the truly great—the stars—reposed in urns more grandiose than those of the ancient Greeks (although replicas, no doubt), those of other humbler ones who had reached and passed on from their heaven on earth were stowed away in what resembled nothing so much as glorified white marble post-office boxes—and to make the resemblance complete, and to give the whole idea of burial the personal touch, these boxes were labelled with "exact reproductions" in everlasting bronze of the actual autographs of the owners. One was made to feel truly, and in what strange significance, Auntie Bissel and her tribe had taken to heart the saying "There is no death!"—but whether the whole represented a gigantically fatuous and pathetic wish, or the odd kernel of a further truth, who could dare to surmise? Or whether the Mausoleum itself was a monument to the death or the childhood of a race!

Auntie Bissel had been uncomfortable in the gazer's seat; but now she was in some mystic stratosphere of her "element." On her face was a mingling of tearful memory and rapture. This reached a climax when she whispered to me her dream of having Gracie and Uncle Harvey "transferred" to this glorified resting-place. When she said that, a memory came over me—as I had seen the house with the L at the Spanish door of Auntie Bissel's new home: a memory of the cemetery in Woodside, the stones of an unimaginative yet fitting simplicity, where only the names stood out from the bleak flashing surfaces. I could see behind Alice's head in the picture hat—as if she were the figure in an Italian primitive—some lost family burial ground, with its forgotten headstones of native marble . . . lost among green hills of New England, that now—the early homesteads abandoned—have the quality of an old song accompanied by the lonely music of an evening cow bell. And this was where these two were to lie? This was what they had finally reached?

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We left now; and with the final grandeur of this sight we were all happy, in spite of regrets upon both sides, that the visit should be over.

Auntie Bissel and Alice went into the kitchen to prepare a meal which they did not call a pick-up lunch. I stayed in the garden a while. The fairy lights of the city far beyond twinkled in lovely artificial magic. Beyond these fairy lights lay the empty-seeming, pale Pacific. The voices of Alice and Auntie Bissel, two notes in a larger strain, were mingled in the house. Again I had the sense of this place, this mixture of the brand-new and the prehistoric old, this humanly conjured fairyland, being a last stand in a mighty processional. Again, just as in the Woodside of my childhood, Auntie Bissel's voice seemed the more real of the two. Her note, if naïve and fabulous, was authentic. With Alice's "perfect replicas" the last word had been spoken—but not, perhaps, with Auntie Bissel's fat cunnin' little ones. There was in Auntie Bissel—with her celluloid dolls, her souvenirs—a fund of life that I did not see perishing even in the beautiful mystery of the Pacific—that ocean not redolent with deep-sea odors, which was the fairy sea forlorn to Alice's ancestral tribe. It was Uncle Harvey who belonged to Woodside, after all. The thought was strange indeed, of mingled tenderness and very wry laughter—the thought of Uncle Harvey, with his Santa Claus face and his easy provincial clothes, stowed away for eternity in one of the splendid post-office boxes. Neither could such grandeur hold the little dim ghost of Gracie in her albatross. But now I seemed to see it as fitting that the most effulgent blossom of this civilization—so pale, so scentless, so gaudy—should have taken the form of the Mausoleum. What was ahead for even Auntie Bissel but some form of "passing on?"—now that her dreams had come true.

I seemed to be aware of a smothered violence surrounding this earthly paradise of which the happy voices in the house held little consciousness. Not forever would "foreigners" be content to bring the fabulous fruits to Auntie Bissel's convenient market. The land itself might not obey Auntie Bissel's tuneful promise (made in an effort to keep me here among the blessed) that it "wasn't gona shake no more no more." Fire and flood were hidden in the rugged hills, there might be destruction in the shining sea. The fairy lights might all go out. The stars might fall.

But Auntie Bissel was right. Her trust had been answered. She had found *her* promised land. She, the daughter of her race, had reached the grandiose ending of the long pilgrimage westward, and there she now dwelt, "provided for."

I could have my dream, too. It was, that when destruction came to this glittering mirage-land, when some Samson shook the pillars on some final day, she would have "passed on," and her contented ashes be resting in a marble post-office shrine inscribed in indestructible bronze in her own garrulous handwriting:

"Auntie Bissel."

ON THE TENDER

By Catherine Morris Wright

THE crowded dock long left, having called good-bye
To my companions, cornered on the floats,
Crushed in the mob against each other, and I
Facing alone that wilderness of boats,
I looked high up the vessel's wall of black
Across the gangway at the staring eyes,
And there above one friendly face looked back,
And a hand waved. I called in glad surprise.

And when, no longer shouting, but still of voice,
I part from those that I have called my own;
Leaving this world I came to not by choice,
And will go journeying out of so alone,
Looking into the dark where I must go,
Shall I see then one single face I know?

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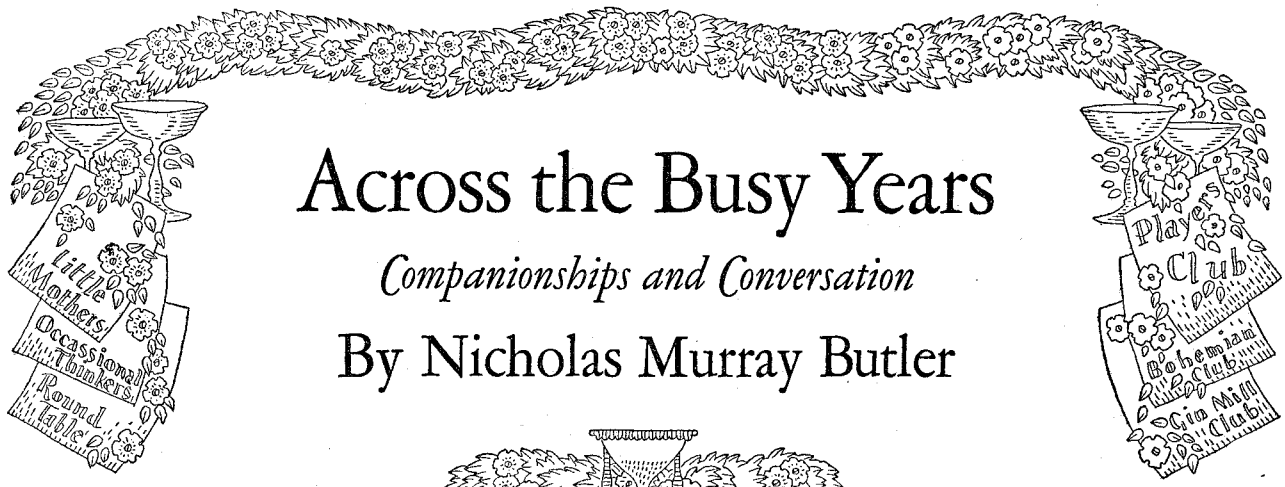
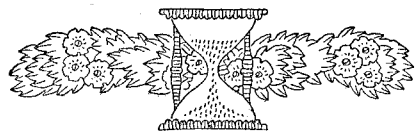


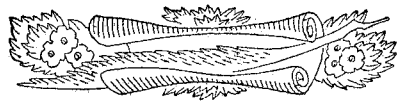
Across the Busy Years

Companionships and Conversation

By Nicholas Murray Butler



Good talk and the places where good talk flourishes are rare. President Butler, looking back over his many and varied experiences, records those he has known—the Players Club, the Century, the Bohemian Club, the Gin Mill Club, and many others. This is the first of several articles from Doctor Butler's autobiography upon which he is now working



THOSE among us who so often lament the decline of true conversation must have had singularly limited human contacts and relationships. It has been my good fortune to be a member of one group after another, recruited from men of quite different background and different interests and from all parts of the United States, with whom conversation of the most inspiring, most instructive, and most elevated kind flourished in highest degree. It so happens that each one of these groups has an interesting history.

The first that occurs to me was the extraordinary company which Edwin Booth gathered about him at The Players when that club first came into being and occupied its charming house on Gramercy Park. Mr. Booth, who was the first President of The Players, had, as I remember, his apartment in the house and was constantly there. He certainly was there at five o'clock every afternoon, usually standing before the fireplace in the library, often holding a newspaper in his hand and virtually presiding in his own inimitable way over an extraordinary group. That company used to include week after week, and month after month, Mark Twain, Brander Matthews, Laurence Hutton, Richard Watson Gilder, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Thomas Nelson Page, H. C. Bunner, Edward Simmons, the painter, and for the better part of one whole winter, Rudyard Kipling. The conversation was brilliant, frequently anecdotal and always illuminating, as well as revealing of the intellectual outlook and characteristics of those who talked. I remember on one occasion, when Mark Twain was not present, that the question was raised as to who was the best known American? Richard Watson Gilder thought it was Mark Twain. In order to test his judgment, not knowing in the least where Mark Twain might be, Gilder wrote him a letter on the Club paper, put a postage stamp upon it sufficient to pay for its transmission either at home or abroad, and dropped it in the letterbox at the corner of Irving Place. The envelope was simply addressed Mark Twain. In less than three weeks from the date of its posting, this letter was delivered to Mark Twain at his lodgings in St. John's Wood, London. Mr. Gilder felt that his judgment was upheld. Inquiry developed that what happened was this: the New York Post Office authorities had read in the papers that Mark Twain was in England. They, therefore, put the letter in the English mail and sent it to London. The London Post Office authorities had read in the papers that Mark Twain had been at certain functions in that city. A little inquiry discovered that he had lodgings in St. John's Wood and there the letter found him.

Unhappily, this group was not long lived. Mr. Booth died in 1893 and Rudyard Kipling stayed but a short time in New York. Changes in the city brought about changes at The Players and after three or four more years, these experiences became a happy memory.

Another and very different group was that known as the Gin Mill Club, the members of which saw much of each other and all of whom lunched together on the Saturday before Christmas for forty-nine consecutive years. In the year 1877 four young men destined to become close and intimate friends for a lifetime were graduated from Princeton, from Yale, and from Columbia. In the Class of 1877 at Princeton were Moses Taylor Pyne and Francis Speir, Jr.; at Yale was William J. Forbes and at Columbia, John B. Pine. These four youths turned their attention to the law and all met at the Columbia Law School in the days when Professor Dwight was at the very height of his teaching and inspiring power. They were making their way in the world and used, at the beginning, to take luncheon together in the modest back room of a beer saloon on Beaver Street. This they called "The Gin Mill." Later on they joined the Downtown Association and statedly took luncheon together there, often in company with others of the larger group which they had invited to join them. Among these were the two Annins, than whom no more brilliant minds came out of any American college in those years—William E. Annin of Princeton, 1877, and Robert E. Annin of Princeton, 1880, both descendants in direct line from Jonathan Edwards; Andrew F. West of Princeton, 1874, who was destined to become

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Dean of the Graduate School at Princeton and a commanding intellectual influence in the life of that institution; Henry Fairfield Osborn of Princeton, 1877, who was already giving evidence of that ability which was to bring him so great distinction for his life work in zoology; William Milligan Sloane of Columbia, 1868, the historian, identified both with Columbia and with Princeton; and Edward Delavan Perry of Columbia, 1875, an outstanding classical scholar, and a few others not so well known. From the very beginning the habit developed of holding what we called the Christmas Luncheon, which took place on the Saturday before Christmas each year. At first, these luncheons were held at the Downtown Association; later, at the Century Club in West 43d Street, and still later, and until their end, at the Lotos Club in West 57th Street. After his return to Princeton from his professorship at Wesleyan University, Woodrow Wilson was brought by Pyne to one of these Christmas Luncheons, but he was not the sort of person to adjust himself to the atmosphere which this group had created and he was never asked again. Unhappily, it was impossible to hold the Fiftieth Annual Luncheon, for when that date came but two of the group were in good health, and one of these was absent from the city.

The records of the Gin Mill Club are of extraordinary interest and contain some striking literary material. West and the younger Annin, in particular, had the gift of writing humorous verse which was exceptionally brilliant. West's poems on Boston and Philadelphia and Annin's poem on Brooklyn are well worth being preserved for a much wider audience than ever heard them within the strict confines of the room in which the Gin Mill Club was holding its Christmas luncheon.

At the luncheon of 1899 West produced his delightful poem entitled "Boston," which was suggested by an address of Charles Francis Adams, delivered shortly before at a meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, in which he stated "that the passage of the Red Sea was, from this point of view, not a more momentous event than the voyage of the *Mayflower*, and that the founding of Boston was fraught with consequences hardly less important than those which resulted from the founding of Rome." The verses which West wrote in comment upon this passage are inimitable. Here are some of the lines from what he called the Idyllic Finale of his poem:

"There is a region lovelier far
Than Eden's vales and vistas are,
Serene and sheltered in repose
From every stormy wind that blows,
A place than all besides more sweet,
At once you know it! Beacon Street!

No rude alarms, no vulgar winds
Disturb the still, complacent minds
Of those who dwell on either side
This Street of life. For there abide
The souls whom Boston loves to greet
A-walking down their Beacon Street.

. . . . . .

Lo! Sunday comes! and at their call
The breakfast bean and codfish ball,
Assisted by a slice of pie,
Conspire to raise their spirits high
And fit them for the arduous day
Their fathers reverenced once,—while they,
No longer needing God to serve,
Adore themselves wtih steady nerve.
Why should a man Jehovah fear?—
The Unitarian church is near.
Yes, God made man, they used to say,
Now man makes God up Boston-way."

At these luncheons there always stood on the table a beautifully carved silver bowl, inscribed with the names of the four who had organized the Club and with the indication that it was to become the property of the eldest son of him who, last dying, left a son. As Pyne and Forbes and Pine all passed away in a quite too rapid succession, this beautiful memorial went to the eldest son of Speir.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the interest and the humor of these Annual Christmas Luncheons. Coming together as we did at one o'clock, we frequently stayed together till sundown, going over our past experiences, telling humorous anecdotes, rereading the old verses which had amused us so often, and occasionally producing new ones. It was a noteworthy group and a brilliant one. Perhaps there has been none other just like it—certainly none that I have known.

Then comes the Bohemian Club of San Francisco, that truly marvellous club with more than a half-century of fine tradition and distinguished performance in letters and in the arts. San Francisco owes much to the fact that from 1849 until the opening of the first transcontinental railway, some twenty years later, it was so remote and so cut off from the rest of the country that it was not only under invitation, but almost under compulsion, to develop its own independent literary and artistic life. Therefore, there came to be about the Bay a group containing a number of brilliant men who, whatever their calling in life, found time and opportunity to have a real interest in and for letters and the fine arts. They were drawn together in the Bohemian Club, the summer camp of which eventually grew into the magnificent Bohemian Grove on the Russian River, which is a place beyond compare in all this world. It is no exaggeration to say that not since Ancient Greece has there ever been such whole-souled and truly human devotion, on the part of a large group drawn from every walk in life, to all that is best in that life, including human relationships, letters, and the fine arts as is to be found each midsummer at the Bohemian Grove. It is the one place in the world where a man counts for nothing but what he really is. Its motto is: Weaving Spiders Come Not Here. When one comes to the trees which mark the entrance to the Grove he is, figuratively speaking, stripped naked of all his honors, offices, possessions and emoluments, and is allowed to enter simply as a personality, there to be weighed and measured in terms of personality and nothing more. I have seen men of highest official position and men of great wealth treated with the greatest unconcern by the dwellers in the Bohemian Grove, simply because these men put on airs and endeavored to assume a superiority to which they had no possible claim. The talk there by night and by day, and the music, vocal and instrumental, and the thousand and one human happenings are unique among modern men.

Those who have not been present at the ceremony of the Burial of Care at the annual encampment in the Bohemian Grove have missed one of the most solemn and inspiring ceremonies of which I know. It is now done in accordance with a stately ritual, but during the Great War different conditions prevailed. In 1918 when the War on the Western Front was at its height, there were at the Burial of Care ceremony voices to represent France, England, Belgium, Italy and the United States. The vast grove of redwoods was in darkness and as the strong light was

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turned upon the spokesmen for these nations, one after another, they were seen standing at a slight elevation, clothed in white, each to recite in verse the message which he had to deliver. From him who spoke for Belgium I heard for the first time, with deepest emotion, the verses beginning "In Flanders fields the poppies blow," which had only lately been written.

Each annual encampment of the Bohemian Club reaches its climax and end with the High Jinks, when the play of the year, written by a member of the Club, is presented, accompanied by the music written by another member of the Club. It is invariably a stirring and inspiring performance and when, on the following day, we separate and go our several ways from that great home of the human spirit, we go, each one of us, with new strength and new inspiration because of our happy and fortunate experiences with the realities of life and quite away from its dross, its too frequent vulgarity, and its lack of comprehension.

In the Bohemian Grove the Camp to which I am so happy to belong is appropriately called The Land of Happiness. We have intimate friends and companions in every part of the Grove, but especially perhaps in the Camps called Lost Angels, Mandalay, and Woof. These companionships and friendships have extended over many years and are precious indeed.

Still another group of more than usual interest and distinction was that known as the Little Mothers. This name was given it in jest by a woman who insisted that when the group came together, it was for the purpose of rocking the cradle of the universe. The Little Mothers had their gathering place at the Hotel Bon Air, Augusta, Georgia, during the month of March, and its life extended over some fifteen years. The members of this group were men who had gone to Augusta for a spring holiday, usually to play golf, and among their number were frequently to be found men of exceptional importance in official life at Washington. This was particularly true in the month of March of each year when the Congress adjourned on March 4. The Little Mothers used to assemble at ten o'clock in the evening in one of the lower rooms of the Hotel Bon Air and sit about a table until midnight

discussing important questions of one sort or another, frequently political. Warren Harding, first as Senator and afterwards as President, was a member of the group and so were such men as Senators Hale of Maine, Hitchcock of Nebraska, Brandegee of Connecticut, Saulsbury of Delaware, Speaker Gillette of Massachusetts, Governor Cox of Ohio, and many others. In 1920 there were in the Club during the month of March at least four men who were voted for as possible candidates for the Presidency at the two National Conventions in the June following. These were Harding and Cox who became the two candidates, Governor Lowden of Illinois, and Senator Saulsbury of Delaware.

Among our many interesting evenings I recall one late in March, 1917. The German Ambassador had been sent home by President Wilson and there was every indication that the United States would shortly be at war with Germany. Senator Hitchcock of Nebraska, who was then a member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, said that he wanted to talk to the Little Mothers that night as he had something very important to say. When we were all settled in our places Hitchcock developed his plan for armed neutrality and did it in excellent taste and with much force. He had posted himself thoroughly on the armed neutrality discussions and happenings of the last years of the eighteenth century, and he developed, in accordance with that precedent, the plan which he wanted the Government of the United States to follow at the moment. He took perhaps a half-hour to tell his story and the whole company listened eagerly. There were twenty or thirty hearers, some of them from New England, some from the Middle West and some from the Northwest, and they represented every possible shade of political affiliation and opinion. When Hitchcock had finished it was difficult to preserve even a pretence of order, for at least a dozen of these men jumped upon him and at him, combating with vehemence amounting almost to fury his point of view and his arguments. Hitchcock stuck to his guns, however, and when he returned to Washington a few days later he presented his plan to President Wilson who would have none of it.

The Little Mothers were put to death by the Eighteenth Amendment, since when that became effective it was no longer possible to have on their table even the slight refreshment which had been usual.

As a result, there grew up at the Hotel Bon Air a quite different group, this time known as the Conversation Club. The members of this group used to gather every morning after breakfast and spend an hour, sometimes two hours, in interesting discussion, frequently listening to the experiences and anecdotes of some one of the Club who had enjoyed some particular opportunity which was of interest. One might tell anecdotes of this group, which was recruited from all over the United States, almost endlessly. It also lasted for nearly fifteen years and was then dissolved by the passage of time.

It was at the Conversation Club that I first heard with some definiteness and precision just what was taking place in Soviet Russia. One morning Hugh L. Cooper, the distinguished engineer, said that he thought the members of the Club might like to hear something of his experiences with the Russian Government in connection with the great dam which he was building on the Dnieper River, and for more than an hour he told us, with greatest elaboration of detail, about his dealings with the Russian Government, financial and other, and he answered our many questions in most illuminating fashion.

Then I must tell something of the

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Occasional Thinkers, a group of understanding and affectionate friends who keep fully alive the best traditions of conversation in our American social life. The perpetually juvenile spirit and temper of this group are shown by their motto: Thank God, we never lived to grow up! as well as their Hymn before Action: Don't let the old jokes die—which is sung in chorus each time that they sit together at table.

The Occasional Thinkers came into existence first some twenty years ago as the William H. Crocker Amusement and Exploration Company, Ltd. Their headquarters on the Pacific Coast were at the Bohemian Club in San Francisco and on the Atlantic Coast at the Lotos Club in New York. The announced object of this organization was to induce Mr. Crocker, whose home was in California, to come to New York as often as possible, to see to it that he was entertained at luncheon, at dinner and at golf with practically uninterrupted continuity, and to plan excursions of one kind and another to different parts of the United States. From year to year some members of this group explored at one time Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific; at another the Pacific Coast from Puget Sound to the Mexican border; at another the mountains and valleys and high passes of the Sierras in California; at still another the desert parts of Nevada from the Southern Pacific Railway on the north down through Death Valley to Mojave on the south, and in general to see to it that no part of the United States was left untouched and unknown. One of our amusing experiences was that we found it necessary to organize several expeditions for the purpose of showing California to its native sons, several of whom had contented themselves with sitting quietly about the Bay of San Francisco all their lives. The group, in addition to Mr. Crocker, consisted originally of Henry S. Pritchett, the distinguished President of the Carnegie Foundation, Jerome Landfield and Joseph D. Redding of San Francisco, Carl Ahlstrom of New York, and myself. Our medical and spiritual adviser was Doctor Alanson Weeks of San Francisco, and as I have already said, our camp in the Bohemian Grove was appropriately called the Land of Happiness.

Little by little the small group which made up the William H. Crocker Amusement and Exploration Company, Ltd. enlarged its number and settled down to the fixed habit of lunching together every Saturday in New York, at that season of the year when golf and other outdoor sport were impracticable. These luncheons, which fortunately are still going on, are held sometimes at one New York City club and sometimes at another and are always an inspiration and a delight. The Occasional Thinkers now number perhaps eighteen or twenty in all, and are drawn from various callings and walks of life, and reflect many different intellectual and professional interests. The enlarged membership of the group now includes:

George Barton French, Charles D. Hilles, Morgan J. O'Brien, James R. Sheffield, Herbert L. Satterlee, John Godfrey Saxe, Frederic R. Coudert, Martin Egan, F. L. V. Hoppin, Hobart Porter, former Governor Alfred E. Smith, Surrogate James A. Foley, Henry P. Fletcher, P. A. S. Franklin, George Barr Baker and Charles W. Field, both now of New York but formerly of California, Laurence Tibbett, Walter W. Price, Daniel E. Pomeroy, and Boris A. Bakhmeteff, the last Ambassador from liberal Russia to Washington.

Until his lamented death a few years ago, Patrick Francis Murphy, outstanding raconteur and wit, was a chief figure at the frequent gatherings of the Occasional Thinkers. His anecdotes, his improvisations and his amusing verses were a constant delight to us all. Few men confined their reading to books on so high a plane as did Pat Murphy, and few used their reading to better advantage. Some of his intimate verses are quite charming. He, like all the rest of us, held in greatest affection Morgan O'Brien, whose career at the Bar, on the Bench, and in good citizenship has been so outstanding through two generations of men. In some verses which he wrote in celebration of Morgan O'Brien's birthday these lines occur:

He's gained so much from age
And lost but little of youth;
In all his life he's put
The spirit of play.
So you can readily see
When he is ninety-three,
He'll be but half the age
He is today.

. . . . . .

When on the tee he takes his place
With shining morning face,
He's ready for all comers, old and young;
But when handicaps are set
Be careful of your bet,
For the best club that he carries is his tongue.

During the tragedy and folly of attempted nationwide prohibiton, Murphy wrote these verses which were enthusiastically sung for several years:

Let us stop somebody doing something
We must regulate other people's views.
Many seem to think they've a right to eat and drink,
But only what we choose.
Let's stop love and cigarette smoking,
We've got noses; they're made for poking.

Chorus

Find out what everybody's doing,
Stop everybody doing what they do.

Let us stop somebody doing something,
There is too much Liberty here,
Wine and song are obviously wrong,
Some Law must interfere.
Let's make the girls wear high-neck blouses,
Put wire-tappers on other people's houses.

Chorus

Find out what everybody's doing,
Stop everybody doing what they do.

It is not likely that there are many groups of this type at once so catholic and so intimate to be found anywhere in the United States, and we are all hoping that the years may deal kindly with us.

Finally, it remains to speak of the Round Table. This most interesting and important group, whose history was written by Brander Matthews in 1926 and privately printed, had its beginning nearly seventy years ago. It is the most famous and doubtless much the oldest dining club in the city of New York. It had its origin among a group who were interested particularly in free trade, which one of them charmingly described as "a cause for which at that time many people were ready to dine." This group included Edwin L. Godkin, Editor of *The Nation*, when that paper was in its prime, Charles H. Marshall, Alfred Pell, E. Randolph Robinson, and one or two more. After a few years the interest of the group broadened and there came to it such outstanding personalities as John L. Cadwalader, James C. Carter, John Hay, Clarence King, John La Farge, Doctor S. Weir Mitchell, Professor William G. Sumner of Yale, and William C. Whitney.

First and last the Round Table has

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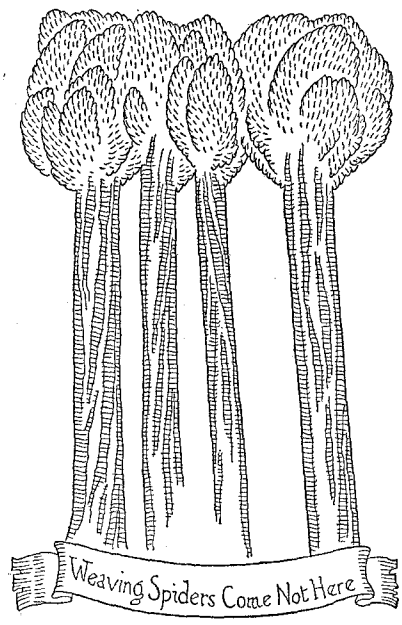
had about one hundred members. The gaps caused by the very few resignations and by the many deaths, have always been promptly filled. There is now no member who was elected in the nineteenth century. The Round Table has included at one time or another two Presidents of the United States, two Secretaries of State, half a dozen Assistant Secretaries of State, two Attorney Generals, one Secretary of War, and one Secretary of the Navy. There have also been eight American envoys to foreign nations, and one Ambassador from a foreign nation, M. Jusserand of France. The list has included two members of the Senate of the United States, two members of the Peace Commission of 1918, one member of the Permanent Court of International Justice, one Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and one Judge of the Circuit Court of Appeals. Princeton has been represented by three Presidents, while Yale and Columbia have had one each upon the list of members. There have been two Bishops, one of New York and one of Massachusetts. There have been Directors of the New York Public Library, of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, of the American Academy at Rome, and of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington. The list has included one Admiral and four Generals, together with three editors and more than three times as many men of letters. Science has contributed three astronomers and two geologists, and the fine arts two painters, one sculptor, five architects, and one landscape architect. There have been five physicians, half a dozen bankers, and as many executives of great corporations. The lawyers lead the list with more than a score of names, four of them having been honored by election to the presidency of the American Bar Association. Some twenty of the members of the Round Table, authors and artists, have also been members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and five have been members of the National Academy of Science.

The Round Table has no constitution, no by-laws and no rules or officers of any kind, save that the member earliest elected serves as Honorary Secretary and takes the chair, which is a mere formality at each dinner. Mr. Godkin was the first secretary and served until his death in 1902. He



was succeeded by another of the seven founders, Charles H. Marshall, who died in 1912, and he in turn by Stephen H. Olin, who died in 1925, and Brander Matthews, who died in 1929. Since that date the senior member has been the present writer.

Among the distinguished guests from overseas who have taken part in one or more of these famous dinners have been Viscount Grey of Falloden, Earl Midleton, President Masaryk of Czecho-Slovakia, Bishop Nicola of Serbia, Sir Martin Conway, Sir Charles Wyndham, George Arliss, Henry Arthur Jones, William Archer, the Marquis of Lothian, H. G. Wells, Guglielmo Ferrero, the Marchese Misciattelli of Rome, and John Buchan, author and publicist, who has recently been appointed Governor-General of Canada.

Good talk, as Brander Matthews says in his sketch, is a symphony in which no solo should be unduly prolonged, and a really good talker is as apt in listening as he is capable in speech. Perhaps the nearest approach to the Round Table is the sort of conversations which Greville describes as having taken place at Holland House when that was the social center of Whig Society in England, and when Sydney Smith and Macaulay were frequent visitors.

There have been many and interesting episodes at these dinners, which are statedly held at the Knickerbocker Club on the first Friday of each month from November until May, both inclusive. It was at the dinner held four weeks before his first inauguration as President that Woodrow Wilson heard from Elihu Root and Joseph H. Choate the full meaning of the treaty which had made possible the building of the Panama Canal. These two outstanding statesmen insisted that our good faith as a nation was involved in living up strictly to these provisions of the Treaty which made no exception in favor of vessels flying the United States flag.

Mr. Root shot to pieces with his knowledge and his logic, the arguments to the contrary which were being urged on the stump and on the floor of the Senate. The President-elect listened attentively; he asked a few questions; and when the explanation ended he said: "This has been an illuminating discussion, I knew very little about this subject. I think I now understand it and the principles that are involved. When the time comes for me to act, you may count upon my taking the right stand." There was no question in the minds of any who were present as to what Mr. Wilson meant, and when the time came he did take the right stand.

The Round Table has been and is a most exceptional group of cultivated gentlemen, looking out upon life from many different points of view, but always with understanding, with broad and sincere sympathies and with that vision which marks the highest and best disciplined intelligence.

Unfortunately, the famous Saturday nights at the Century Club exist no longer. They fell a victim to the changes which new habits and conventions brought into the life of New York and to the personal changes which were inevitable with the passage of time. First in the old Clubhouse on East 15th Street and afterwards in the new house on West 43rd Street, which is now nearing the completion of its first half-century of occupancy, there gathered each Saturday night from one hundred to three hundred of the most interesting and attractive men that New York could furnish. They were men of letters, artists, scholars, statesmen, and men of the world. There was no interest which they did not reflect and no form of public service or activity with which some of them were not in closest contact. On Saturday evenings they used to sit together in casual groups, to smoke and to talk until midnight and long after. Indeed, Henry Holt once said that it should be made

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a misdemeanor to leave the Century on Saturday night before the hour arrived at which the Clubhouse was to be closed. He added, with a smile, that he himself did not sleep very well.

If there was a group from which came shouts of laughter and merriment, it was pretty certain to be gathered about Clarence King or F. Hopkinson Smith or Charles C. Beaman or Frank D. Millet or Brander Matthews or Joseph H. Choate. Centers of somewhat more serious groups might be Bishop Henry C. Potter or Professor J. Howard Van Amringe or Henry Adams or Joseph W. Harper or Augustus St. Gaudens or, in earlier days, George W. Curtis, William M. Evarts, or Edwin L. Godkin. All this now belongs to the past.

The good fellowship of the Century has been marked within very recent years by a characteristically clever and amusing revival of the Twelfth-night celebration, which has taken place at intervals over many years.

These reflections indicate, once again, what great advantage Age has over Youth. Age may look back upon years of outstanding happiness and satisfaction which are accomplished facts. Youth may look forward into an unknown future with hope and confidence, but it will be some time before the history of that future can be known and written.

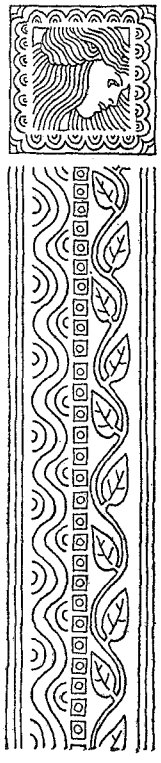
If Ponce de Leon were still in search of the Fountain of Perpetual Youth, he would be able to find it in any one of these stimulating and truly noteworthy groups. He would understand perhaps the famous *mot* of Patrick Francis Murphy: Youth would be more interesting if it came later in life.

All these conversation groups, different as they have been and are, have one important characteristic in common; that is, the entire absence of anything unbecoming or malicious, either in speech or in story. Those who tell us that conversation no longer exists as it did in the high days of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, are flatly contradicted by the existence for over half a century of the several groups which have just been briefly described. There has been and there could not well be, any better, any more interesting, or any more informing conversation than that which is theirs. To have known and to know these splendid and high-minded human beings, leaders in the many-sided life of our time, has of itself been not only an inspiration but a liberal education in the humanities.

Nothing could be more foolish than to say sadly that all the good things have gone out of life. He who says it does not know where to look.

THIS FOND INTENTION

By William Rose Benét



This fond intention was a seed
Lightly cast, but deep in loam
Working through darkness for our need
Toward what we yet may carry home. . . .

The fields are black. We scan the air
And hear the accusing crows that fly
Where the stiff ground would crack the share,
As pale sun struggles in the sky.

Our nostrils take the acrid smoke
And withering winter's smell of frost,
And yet—as though a season spoke
Deep in my heart—it is not lost!

It will not bring the spring we sought,
As this is not the time foretold
By mad emotion and rapt thought.
This autumn perished of its gold.

Between us stands a wall of stone,
While our eyes dazzle with our tears—
Yet know with me that what was sown
Works in the earth for all our years.

It does not seem—! (Yet take my hand.)
It will not—! (Deeply draw your breath.)
This is but landscape—not the land
That never has acknowledged death.

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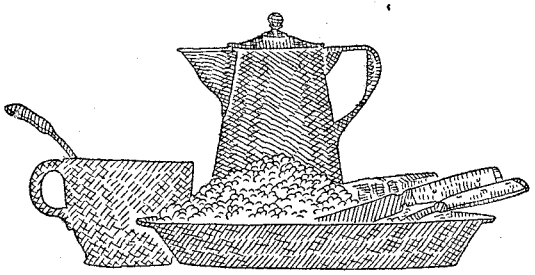
Good Food, Good Meat

A STORY

By Evan Shipman



This year the Old Man's got some sense. This year we go South. Right after the Sale. Work in our shirt sleeves, palm leaf fans, Carolina moon overhead, and a pint to wake up on. And is that nigger cooking good! No more sleigh rides and plowing through drifts till April for us. Down there you can have your colts on the track every day of the week, ship back North the first of May, and have a two months' start on these Eskimos that think a trotter's a cross between a reindeer and an ice boat. Yes, sir, when we put those sleighs away last spring, we said good-bye to your bracing New England weather. And I hope for good and all.

How would you like to be cooped in half the year, stuck on top of that hill, with the old wind playing tunes through every crack in the barn? And half a mile down the road with a lantern mornings, to eat, or you'll be in up to your ears in a snowdrift. Maybe you don't think the wind can pile up a drift across those flats. I've seen 'em up to the stable roof. You can't tell me that colts will come on in any such climate like they will down South where a sheet's plenty cover day times and many's the night you don't even need the blanket. I don't care if Walter Cox does train up here, I say it stands to reason a horse'll come on faster where he don't have to spend all his energy keeping warm.

You take last winter. We were on the track every fair day. I can hear that snow crunch yet, and at night it seemed like every timber in the barn was shifting—crack, bang, every five minutes, like pistol practice. But many and many a day we were in around the stove. Snow, or in the spring that damned cold rain. They talk about April showers, but I've seen it come down steady for three weeks. Oh, it gets you down. I don't know what we guys would have done if it hadn't been for the radio the Old Man bought us. Talk about your life savers. I'll bet that radio was going full twelve hours of every day. I say that and I'm no one to talk; this is my home town, but will you believe me, I don't think I was on the main street a half a dozen times the first three months we was up here. It was different along the last end. Billy and I got out and around a little, but the early part of the winter we hugged the stove.

You get up at half-past five with the mercury at twenty below and spend the morning wrastling with those two-year-olds, get them put away, and cleaned up after lunch, before you know it, it's dark, and it's a good mile downtown—well, you just don't feel much like moving. We'd read the papers and get in under the blankets and listen to that radio.

Three times, Saturday nights, the bunch of us—all except Providence; that son of a gun wouldn't give a dollar to see his grandmother's funeral—we hired a car and went into the city; ate at one of those chink joints, and went to a picture. You get a bottle and this and that and there's ten dollars shot to Hell the first thing you know. I'd rather save my dough and buy me a little car. I could use it this winter, down South, you bet. But come right down to it, it ain't the money you spend, it's the trouble and all, and what do you get? A lot of this fancy food and an evenin' at a picture show and a big head Sunday morning. I got so I'd a damned sight rather have a little quiet rummy game right there in the office. Sometimes Fred would stay over or some of the owners would drop in and we'd have a session shooting craps. Times, that office would be so full you couldn't wedge yourself in with a shoe horn, the old stove rip roarin' in the corner, and the air so thick you could cut it with a knife.

We'd stoke that old station stove we got till she was red hot. You'd ought to seen the boys start peelin'. Big Dick would come over—did you ever see him shoot? Does he work! All two hundred pounds of him workin' for those dice to be right to popper. He used to get down to his undershirt, and then he'd

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straighten up and reach back of him for a towel. His cryin' towel, we used to call it. But it was one of ours you see, off the rack, and you'd a laughed when he got aholt of one of Providence's towels. Of course he never touched no dice. He'd be lyin' there on the cot, eatin' his oranges most likely, and he'd see Big Dick reachin' for the towel. "Hey there," he'd yell, "if you've got to have one of them, why can't you bring your own?" It got so one of us would plant that towel back of Big Dick whenever we had a game. He didn't give a damn. He'd just grin at Providence and go on and wipe the sweat off.

Pay day or such I'm always willin' to lay down my five bucks. Droppin' five bucks in a little game don't hurt nobody, and sometimes I come out of those sessions good winner. I salted that away. I'd rather run out on the right side than be in the Old Man all the time for my next week week's pay. But you take our William, he was always going to break the bunch—hungry. He'd make a pass and let it lie there every time till they took him. He didn't care. He'd give me the wink and go over to Providence and say, "Let me take a fin till next week for my board money, will you?"

Providence'd be lying there on the cot peelin' an orange and he'd fall for it every time. "Oh, so it's lend you a fin, is it," he'd say, "and maybe I haven't got anything better to do with my money than go pissin' it away on those dice." He'd lie there and laugh, and you could hear him crinklin' the big roll of bills he always carried in his pocket. "See me next pay day," he'd say. He wasn't so dumb but what he knew we wasn't laughin' at Will when he'd spring that. But his own crack was good enough for him—he could laugh all to himself, and lie there suckin' oranges with his wad in his pocket.

We boarded where we always do—down to Mrs. Meyers'. But along in the winter she took sick. You'd a thought that big strappin' girl of hers might a been a help to her mother, but she's just like all of these kids—afraid to get her hands dirty. For a couple of days we didn't know what to do. Big Dick's outfit wrastled for themselves, out of cans I guess, but we were God damned if we were goin' to live like a bunch of Gypsies. I don't know as we did a Hell of a lot better at that.

Bushey had been droppin' in all winter—you can be sure he was over every Saturday there was a crap game. He can cook, or he makes out to any way. I guess the thick little bum has tried his hand at every trade going. They had him fightin' preliminaries down to the Arena last fall but he wasn't never sober long enough to train any. The two times he was in there he got himself knocked for a loop. The fighting bootlegger! Well, we hired him at nine per. Maybe we were smart. But he used to ride out from the city and was always poppin' off around, and there we were caught short, so why not give Bush a chance?

I'll never forget. There we were with no place to eat, and of course Fred was looking out all over the neighborhood. The Old Man's well known here and well liked. But if I do come from this town, they're the God damnedest bunch of old women, men and women included, you ever see. Nobody wantin' to feed a bunch of swipes. I don't know what they thought we'd do—put our feet on the table, or rush the girls, or what. Say, do you remember that family across from the mile track? I never in my life see a man so ashamed as he was to have boarders in, and it was what we was doin'. That was what riled the old gent. I'd go back to the kitchen to pay my board bill, and there he'd be with an apron round his middle, washin' dishes, and I never hated to do nothin' like I did forkin' over that money to his wife—she put it away like it burned her. They fed us good—you remember—all you wanted, and good. But it was the old boy in the kitchen, and the girl maybe seein' her boy friend in the parlor while the late ones were at supper. I tell you, it's the depression, and they ain't got no work, but boy, do they hate it when they're down to feedin' a bunch like us? Not that anybody ever spoke out of turn, or that there was anything ever wrong—you know.

Well, we hired Bush to feed us in the office. He had the stove there and he claimed he was a cook. Maybe we weren't the prize idiots! Fred said, "There's Bushey been cheatin' you on rot gut gin for years, but you wait until he begins cheatin' your belly and you'll see." The Old Man don't like to drive all the way into the city for dinner; he'd eat with us. Bush piles the old beans on the plate—day after day, can you beat it, pork and beans. All he had to do was order from the grocery. I told him one day, I says, "I never yet see a man was limited to two words to his vocabulary like you—two words," I says, "pork and beans." But Fred, but the Old Man, he piles on the catsup and grins at us and says, "We don't care if Mrs. Meyers never gets well, do we? You're good, boy," he says to Bushey. "You fellers have found a chef. Tommy, shove me over that plate of beans!" He had it on us. He split his sides when he hear Bush was coming over to cook, but still and all he hadn't been able to find a family to take us. He could laugh, but all he had to do was drive the old bus into town.

That was along the first of March. It set in to thaw the week after Bush come and the rain didn't let up all month. First thing you heard in the morning in the dark, that steady rain on the roof. Most days we didn't get out at all—had to put duck-boards down to those end stables on the east wing. Of course the colts just stood there in the barn with the blanket on and half of 'em caught colds—one starts in weather like that, and it seems to run right through the string. My filly fell away until she wasn't nothing but skin and bones; I spent my time swabbin' Doctor Bell's up her nose and fumigatin' the damn stall with a croup stove. Billy had the bunch next to me down the farther end. One of 'em was that big chestnut stud, Peter May, they bought last fall to the Sale—give seventy-five hundred for. Well just as soon as we started to hitch him, he went wrong in front somewheres and they layed him up and fired him. Couldn't find it though. He come out just as sore as he was before. He didn't jog five miles all winter; they just had him there in that stall down to the end, eatin' his head off and rompin' round that box like a twelve hundred pound puppy. Why you'd go in mornings and he'd have the ceiling plastered with straw, or just about, and buckets—why, I'll bet we got that clown a fresh water pail every three days. He'd nose 'em down and then kick Hell out of 'em.

I felt sorry for the big cuss. But he couldn't jog, and weather like that you couldn't walk him. One morning he

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was raising the Devil's own racket down there and Billy come over to my stall and says, "For two cents I'd change places with that stud horse. I don't know what the Hell the difference would be. I ain't been off this hill top in a month. I'd ought to have more sense than be where I am—slipped on a length of duck board and went up to my neck in that muck. You know what I'd like to do? Open that stall door and let Pete ramble right out through the centerfield or where the Hell ever he wants. I have to keep his top door closed," he says, "or he'd be over that bar any time. Listen to him," he says. "He sounds just like I feel."

Now it's funny, ain't it, that you can hang around all a winter and never know what's goin' on not a mile from you and then all of sudden you're right in the middle of something you might have had the whole time. I'd run into a pair two nights before down to the drugstore. A team I used to know pretty well. This Ethel, she asks why I ain't been to see her—and there they are livin' not fifteen minutes' walk up the road. Well, we passed the time of day back and forth and I promise her I'll be up, see, and she says, "Why don't you bring some one else and we'll throw a party. Just like old times," she says. I knew what that meant, and man, five or six years ago when I was deliverin' groceries for Clarkes' she was the livest article on the route. Say, you'd laugh what you run into on those routes. Out to Greenpoint, I used to barge in, visit along—all the insurance clerks gone to work mornings—one morning with this Ethel I walk right into the kitchen and don't see nobody, but I hear her in back, so I sing out (it's the first of the month) "Here's the ice man and here's the bill. Where'll I put it?" "Put it on the table. My pocketbook's in the bureau and I can't come out," says she. So I go in. Late all along the line that morning.

If it wasn't for nothin' but a chance to get quit of Bush's cookin' for one night, I'd a gone up, and all I says to Will was what a swell cook this dame is. I don't need to tell him twice. Why the sour looks Bushey was gettin' would have shamed anybody else. You take what I think, a man may be crooked and all that, but the meanest crook of all is the one robs your belly. Providence was a case. If it hadn't been we was

pretty near as sick of that chow as he was we could have laughed easier, but just the same it was a sketch to hear those two. All that man lives for is what he puts into him, and did it hurt him those nine berries he was layin' down every Saturday. He'd fork himself a plateful of that prepared meat—that sliced stuff, comes in big rounds—then he'd say, "How much is that a pound, Bushey? Just about a toss up between that and tenderloin, ain't it?"

"No, sir," says Bush right back, "I paid nineteen cents for that, and you can figure out what that comes to at six pounds. You don't plan on eatin' a hot meal three times a day?"

"Maybe I don't. Not three times a day. But we had that damned dry cereal this morning—might just as well go out and feed with them colts—a couple of sliced bananas floatin' around in condensed milk, where's your hot meal there? Wasn't nothin' hot, not even the coffee. Dinner time, you give us pork and beans, and now here's the other end of that same hog, I suppose, or do they call it South American goat—which is it, Bush?"

"Well, I did slip up a little today, fellers," says Bush, "but to tell you the truth, I didn't trust them eggs up to the grocery."

"That's all right, Bush," Billy says. "You should a bought 'em and there we'd had our chicken dinner Sunday."

Bushey lays down his dish towel. "Now look here, you don't know what it costs to feed this outfit. Damn near every cent I get goes right back to that store. I ain't makin' a cent but my honest profit," he says, "and I only wish one of you guys would try it a week."

"Sure," says Bill. "And I suppose Mrs. Meyers is in the business for charity."

It was just like that every other day—if I hadn't been walkin' round hungry most of the time it would have tickled me too—but to tell you the truth, I got God damned good and sick of it—we all did. And yet there we were couldn't do nothing. So when Will and me gets a chance to step out up to the chateau, why we wouldn't a cared what they looked like so long as there was a chance for a feed, see. But the funny part of it is they was knockouts. If I'd only a known about their being up there, we could a had it soft most of the winter—and not a mile to walk.

This team, they was an act; you couldn't tie 'em. Ethel's a bird, a sharp one. She's been around ever since I've known her. She never had to worry, or did she? But she's not tellin' where it's coming from. I never asked 'em. I was welcome and no questions asked so what the Hell. I always say, what's the use pryin' into anybody's business when they treat you square? What they was doin' up in this neck of the woods besides housekeepin', I don't know—and its wild back over in there—but there they was, and fixed proper. Sets back there right in a peach orchard. When Will's going up, he says, "Hell, this ain't the season for peaches." "Preserved, William, well preserved," I tell him.

Helen — that's the side-kick — she never had so much to say, but man, she was plenty on her own account. She was on the bean-pole order, long and leggy, and looked like her meals didn't do her much good, but when she was rigged out, she could step—kind of catch your eye, too, if you like that kind. I don't fall for 'em much; afraid they'll rattle if you shake 'em. When she throwed a couple into her, she was sport. That girl didn't give a damn what she pulled or where.

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You take it once—this was quite a while back—to the summer meeting. I asked the pair of them out to the races. I started a horse that afternoon and I couldn't take 'em, but I give Joe the tickets and five bucks—he was broke—to see 'em all through the afternoon. Well Joe, the little son of a gun, puts the fin in his pocket to lay a bet with and takes the girls up in the bleachers. They get there late or somethin' and I'm just leadin' my skate out from the paddock. I see 'em goin' up to the top of them bleachers through the crowd and the old wind was blowin' so it would like to make mufflers out of their skirts. They was laughin' and yellin' around so I could hear their noise clear down on the track. They didn't give a damn.

Well Joe, the little runt—say, he's nuttier than a fruit cake when he can get a bet down, do you know it—won that afternoon by some miracle; bought a field ticket, five in forty, and cashed. So we all throw a party that night. They stayed over. We took 'em to Hillyer's barn where Buck was peddlin' then, and they had just as good a time as if we was downtown. There was a gallon under the cot so we kept it up till most ten o'clock and then there wouldn't nothin' do but we had to go out to the amusement park. Buck had his car.

I won't forget that night if I live to a hundred. Why we wasn't all killed, or locked up! We go up on the coaster, and Helen, she's tight as a tick, sittin' on top of Joe and every time the coaster takes a dip, she hollers. Well we get up where it takes that long drop and what must she do but stand up in the car, yank my hat off and yell she's going to dive right after it. Joe grabs her, but I tell you it didn't lack much of them both bein' over the side. Talk about your Indians!

Anyway, Billy and me got to goin' up regular this March. That first mornin' I ask him Billy says the only kick he's got is Bush savin' on his runnin' out. We go up and there's steak for supper and homebrew and we carry along a quart from the drugstore. Ethel and me had a kind of understandin', but I didn't know how it would work out with Will up there. He's a quiet cuss—don't say a hell of a lot you know—but he falls for the bean pole the first night, falls for her, what I mean, and after we stick around playin' the graphophone and throwin' that hootch into us, it don't take them two long to get acquainted. Why we could have boarded steady up there if we'd wanted to. I was kind of careful, though, because I didn't want Ethel to have no trouble with the neighbors—they don't set near any other house—but you know what a snoopin' bunch of busybodies they are in this town. I don't believe we were puttin' a hell of a lot over on some of them at that.

Lots of mornings we didn't pull in till long around four or five and of course we was bleary-eyed startin' to work. It sure was hell gettin' started, but you stick the old head in the pail and that'll freeze the sleep out of you all right. We was workin' a couple, one morning and I guess I must a been wobblin', the Old Man says, "Where you two tom cats spendin' your evenin's?"

"Evenin's is right, Fred," I says.

"Well, I knew it wasn't listnin' in on that radio," he says. "I guess that rich cookin' of Bushey's must make you restless," he says. "We'll have to charge your coffee. I can see that."

So we was steppin' every evenin'. We was right to home. Mine, Ethel, she was a good scout; she and me got along fine. But Will, he was nuts over this Helen. And the way she acted she must have thought a lot of him. You know, I can't see this fallin' stuff—not with nothin' as easy as she was. I like 'em. Sure, I like a good time, but I ain't wastin' no worry over 'em. But then I ain't no two-year-old. Our William, you know, that age rarin' to go, head and tail up every time a filly'll nicker. This time he was caught good and plenty. She made him dance, but come right down to it, the long-legged rogue was just as anxious as he was.

It got so Ethel and me would visit along in the parlor, and those two sulkin' out in the kitchen doin' dishes. She'd wash and he'd wipe, and they'd go an hour fussin' out there without sayin' a word. Then she'd lay into him. One night she heaved a platter and by the sounds I guess he cuffed her. She come into the parlor cryin' and she says to me, "If you was a man you'd throw that big bum out. God damn his stinkin' soul," she says. "I won't never speak to him again," she says. Well she set there in the corner five minutes and he come in and goes over and she picks up a broom and lets him have it over the head. Then she beats it upstairs with him chasin' after her. That's the story. That's the way they used to carry on regular.

Ethel, she'd say to me, "Can't you do nothin' to make them two behave? I believe he'll murder her."

"Be yourself," I tell her. "If you think that scufflin' upstairs is murder, I'll go up." She wasn't born yesterday. She'd sit there in the rocker and kind of cluck to herself and then bust out gigglin' at me. "Why, we was young once ourself, wasn't we, Tommy?" she'd say.

Will was gone over her. Of course the bunch down to the stable, they knew where we was shovin' off to evenin's. They'd like to been included. One mornin' along the end of March we was cleanin' harness there in front and Bert Stillman was walking a horse on the circle. We'd got in pie-eyed that mornin' and just flopped down on the cots without changin' our clothes. We went to work right as we was. Well, the bunch was kiddin' us there and somebody sing out to Will from the office, "Are you goin' up again tonight in them duds?"

"Yes, and all the 'horse-men-knew-her,'" Bert Stillman says.

Now Bert has been pals with Billy ever since they both come out, five, six years ago. Those two were thick as thieves and always had been, but Will goes over to Bert where he's leadin' the horse and he says short, "Do you want a slap in the face?"

"No," says Bert, "I was kiddin', Will, you shouldn't take it that way. I didn't mean no harm."

"Well, you keep your face shut or it's liable to be shut for you," says Will. And he walks away and they didn't speak a word to each other for a week.

Up there, she made out like she didn't want him drinking, see. She was a sink herself whenever she got the chance and I'll bet there was always a bottle hid around day times but when Bill was up she'd be plaguin' him every time he took a shot. And then he'd set in and get full. Sometimes she'd mix up a drink for him as nice as could be, and set there on the sofa; then when he went to pour another, she'd a hid it on him. And one night he was pretty well started, she emptied

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out a whole quart. He picked up his hat and went off back down to the stable and then she was at me the whole evenin' to bring him back. I told her I wasn't goin' to mix in none of their ructions.

He stayed away a couple days. Finally she came after him right down to the stable, middle of the afternoon. She didn't care who see her, either. He was workin' on that big horse, Stamina, and she goes right into the stall—I was in next door, so I heard the whole thing. Bill was doing up his legs, putting the cottons on, facing the back of the stall. He thinks it's me and asks me what I want, but she says, "Is that a good horse, mister?" and I guess he turns around and see who it was.

"Stay away from that horse," he says, "he's liable to grab you."

"Oh, he wouldn't bite me," she tells him. "Look, I've brought some sugar for him."

"He don't like sugar. And I wasn't kiddin' about him either. He'll bite you. Stay away from him."

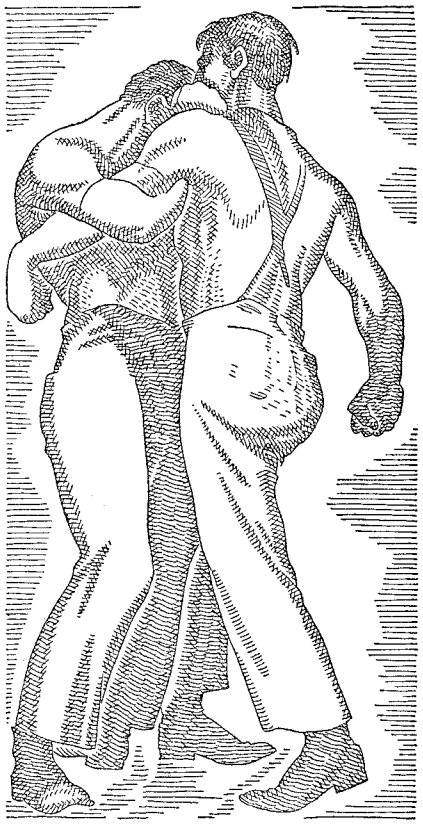
"Do you like sugar, Will?" she says. "And look, I ain't afraid of him. See, and he does like it. He's takin' it right out of my hand."

"He don't want to be petted. Let him alone."

But when she left, he'd promised to come up again that night.

We didn't get up there until late that night, and I guess you've heard a part of this story, but not the whole of it. The whole thing had been due a long time and that was the night. It was Saturday and I had a bottle. Man, the dreary days up in that dump! It come down all that day like it never would stop—dirty skies and every piece of wood-work sweatin' water, and the old roof leakin' until all you could hear was drip, drip. And outside, that swish when the wind takes the rain. They say they don't get none of that weather down South. I hope not anyway—I've got that damp in my bones yet. That March rain is enough to drive any man to drink.

Bill and I had been into the bottle every so often, but we wasn't full, neither of us. Supper time, Bushey fed us baked beans—we'd had canned spaghetti for dinner. We set down to the table and nobody was speakin' to Bush. It had got beyond even kickin' about. You wouldn't a thought he'd



been so bold, and he'd come out winner for thirty bucks two days before in a crap game—our dough.

He marches around the table, dishin' out this stuff, grinnin', the hard little mick. And then he says to Bill—he knew there was trouble in it, too; he'd been out there the morning Will had come down on Bert—he says, "I see Helen Meyers come to call on you this afternoon. How is she, William?" Will didn't say nothin'. "She and me used to be real friendly," Bush goes on. "I met her to the grocery yesterday and she asked me up to the chateau. I hadn't seen Ethel Gilligan in a dog's age."

"So you was up to the chateau?" Will asks him.

"Oh, I just dropped in for a little visit."

Will set down his knife and fork. "You're lyin', Bush," he says, "You weren't up there yesterday, or no time. They wouldn't let you in."

"How do you mean, I'm lyin'?" He's gettin' hard, see.

Will gets up from the table and takes off his coat, slow. "I mean you're a lyin' bastard. And is that enough, or shall I come over and tell it to you some other way?"

"All right, all right, I'll fight," Bush tells him. "Let me get off my coat."

They both of them strip off coats and shirts, and Billy's bigger than Bush, but not near so thick—Bush is built like a barrel. Bill always was on the growthy side. The bunch of us was up right off and we cleared the table into the corner and give them room. We was all standin' around that office in a ring. Bush took one look around at us but he didn't have to; he knew what each and every one was wishin' him. I mean he knew he was ripe for the business unless he plastered Bill, and he wasn't too sure about what we'd spring then. The way he looked us over he knew he was ripe for a shellacking, but I will say the little bastard was game. He didn't stall.

Bill rushes him with his chin on his chest, breathin' hard, and it's jab, jab. Little short ones, and Bush boxes, but he ain't got the room; that office ain't no ring, and we was close. He's a sweet boxer. He gets Billy a couple hard to the face, one, two, and steps away quick, and Billy's face all red where he lands. They go to it fast a minute, and then stand off for a breather. "You had this comin' a long time, you mick bastard," says Will.

"What comin'?" Bush sticks his chin out at him and Will goes in again. They fight there toe to toe a minute, tradin' 'em, and then Will catches Bush with a haymaker, and Bush goes down on a cot with Will right square on top of him. But Bush was plannin' it because he goes down with his knees drawn up over his belly, and when Bill is on him, he kicks out straight and sends him clear across the room. That's an awful neat trick if you know it. I thought Bill's head was busted, the crack he got agin' the wall. He gets up though, and they stall a little, gettin' their breath—Bush was out of training, fat as a hog.

When they box, Bush lands twice to Bill's once, but Billy hits hard. And he slams him one, see, and closes, and throws Bush to the floor—wrastling. Bush wriggles onto his face and Billy's on him, givin' it to him right and left on the head.

So I see my chance right there. I'm gettin' even right then for all the dog food he'd fed me last winter. I drop down and let Bush have one little short one right in the kidney. Man, he hollered like a stuck pig. And it didn't travel six inches, I swear. He straightened out like a stiff. "I'm done, I'm

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done," he hollers. "Oh, God, you've killed me."

Bill gets up and gives him the boot a couple of times. I thought he'd caved his ribs in sure. "Jesus, that's enough, I'm licked—don't gang me, fellers," he yells. He thought we was all comin' after him. Will was goin' to give him the old boot again, but I hauled him off. Enough is enough. He sees his chance then and made for the door, and called back while he's goin', "You ganged me, you bastards. I'll square with you."

Providence is standin' by his cot, and before Bush gets out he says, "No, but we'd ought to ganged you. But I ain't given you my present yet for what you done to my belly." And he picks up that billiard cue he always keeps down back of his bed for fear some one'd try to rifle him of that roll he carries. He swings the cue for Bush's head and just misses him. It would have dropped him if it had ever connected.

Bush gets out the door. "Wait," says Will, "I ain't through with him yet." He pulls away from where I'm holdin' him and he chases right after Bushey, chases him out and around the manure box, all winded, and Bush two jumps ahead of him, yellin' blue murder all the while. "He'll kill me. Don't let him kill me, fellers." Then Will gives out and sets down right out there in the wet, half naked, and Bush is off. That's the last we see of him till the races. He sent somebody up after his suitcase, and the story was all around how Dunbar's outfit had ganged him. They say he was a pretty sight when he took the trolley to town that night. But he had it comin', I ain't lyin'.

Maybe the Old Man seen him down town that night, or maybe he hear of it, anyway next morning he springs, "Bushey must of been starvin' you guys. I hear you put him in the grinder and tried to make hamburg of him last night."

No, sir. Never again; not up in that dump. This winter, we're in the sunny South. But I'll bet you a buck right now Will ain't with us. He's been hankerin' after that skirt all summer. Every town we come to, he'd be hangin' around the post office, lookin' for a letter. A letter! As if she hadn't got nothing else to do but set down and write to him. Of course I know what she's been up to all along, but I ain't tellin' him —it wouldn't do no good. What's the use wastin' your breath? Live and learn.

ITALIAN MORNING

By Louise Bogan

HALF-CIRCLE's come before we know.
Full in the falling arc, we hear
Our heel give earth a lonely blow.
We place the hour and name the year.

High in a room long since designed
For our late visit under night,
We sleep: we wake to watch the lined
Wave take strange walls with counterfeit light.

The big magnolia, like a hand,
Repeats our flesh. (O bred to love,
Gathered to silence!) In a land
Thus garnished, there is time enough

To pace the rooms where painted swags
Of fruit and flower in pride depend,
Stayed as we are not. The hour wags
Deliberate, and great arches bend

In long perspective past our eye.

Mutable body and brief name,
Confront, against an early sky,
This marble herb, and this stone flame.

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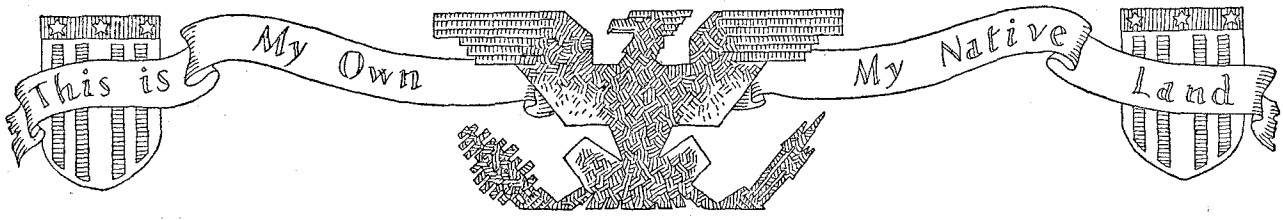
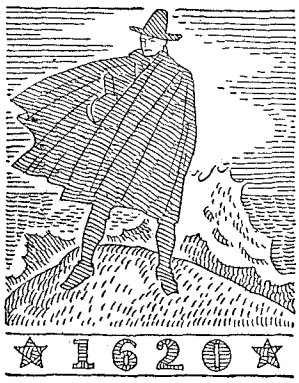
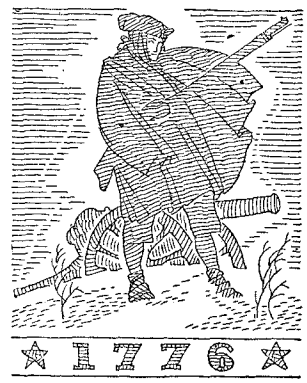


The Avoidance of Being American

By Struthers Burt



This paper might have been called "On a Certain Obstinacy in Americans." What sort of nationalism are we going to create? Mr. Burt points to the responsibility of the artists and writers and to those classes which have been most favored. The American aristocracy has so far failed because of a lack of responsibility toward the nation as a whole



THE little room under the auditorium where the lecturer waited was like one of our better morgues. It had the stillness, the airlessness of a vacuum, and on its walls of mottled, brown imitation marble, adding to the sense of a vacuum, as photographs do with their perpetuation of an arrested moment, were portraits of celebrities who once, passing through the room, had sung, or danced, or read, or talked on the stage above. Most of them were dead—the celebrities. And the women had that look of reminiscent virtue, which, however contrary to fact, seems always to overtake blondes when being photographed, and the men wore their hair and neck-ties in the fashion of the days—not so far distant—when celebrities were celebrities, and knew it.

Presently, and so quietly as to be startling, the introducer entered.

A charming, tired man, rubbing his hands together and smiling absent-mindedly. Nor could you blame him for his undertaker's manner. The evening was a murdered evening. Some one was going to speak—I was. And I wondered from what pleasant table or domestic drowsiness the introducer had been torn, and I understood him perfectly and wanted to tell him so. More terrible even than speaking in person, must it be to introduce each week some stranger, and afterwards sit for an hour and listen to him or her talk. An hour . . . followed by half an hour of questions.

But I hadn't time for that. Almost immediately I was walking up a narrow flight of stairs, and there, with horrifying suddenness, was the empty stage—appallingly empty as stages always are for lectures. And the desk. And the footlights. And the quiet, fierce faces of the audience. I . . . of the company of the martyrs who had stepped blinking into the sunlight of the Colosseum; and of the company of Charles the First and Marie Antoinette upon the scaffold!

To my own surprise I began to speak.

Now, with every audience there is an initial prejudice to be overcome, and this is easily understandable. Audiences pay money for lectures—nobody has yet explained why—and hence they are, to begin with, from Missouri. The lecturer is a little in the position of the slave girl displayed on the block of an oriental market place. But this audience had something more than the initial prejudice; it was peculiar. I had been warned that it would be; three-quarters of it—so I had been told—composed of recent citizens, or citizens of one generation. And of these, a majority were frustrated virgins and the curious young men who accompany such virgins to lectures and nowhere else. Earnest, mature women who adopt causes with the headiness of the maternal instinct, and saturnine young men whose rationale of thinking you cannot fathom, except that it is wrong. At all events, they were totalitarians—this section of my audience, with the totalitarian hatred and contempt for the other person's point of view, and—now—the totalitarian injunction not to listen to it. I found that out very soon. Or rather, I found it out as soon as I had made clear my premises. Up to then we had been getting along together fairly well—the audience and myself. I think the audience had misunderstood the title of my lecture. I think a nice, soothing, old-fashioned attack upon America had been anticipated, and when that wasn't altogether forthcoming, there was disappointment and shock. Anyway, quite suddenly, I could feel 80 per cent of the audience rise and come toward me—I mean spiritually, of course—and then hem me in with a wall of dark faces and darker minds.

Unfriendly, unwilling to listen to any arguments save those of which it was already convinced.

This is disconcerting, especially if from long residence in simple sections of the world, you have acquired a vigorous vocabulary. The really accomplished lecturer does not try to maintain

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out loud the sequence of his thoughts while turning over in his mind what he considers suitable epithets for his listeners' ancestors. To do so is to create too intense a double interest. And I am afraid, anyhow, where totalitarianism is concerned, I am behind the times. Still too much an admirer of the scientific spirit.

You see, the subject of my lecture, and it is necessary to mention it in order to make clear the reactions of my audience, was the rising tide of American nationalism and the responsibility toward this manifestation on the part of the American writer . . . the American writer, or any one else who commands publicity. And I think that's an important subject no matter what your brand of political or social thinking. Important, if for no other reason, and whether you like it or not, because nationalism is now here at long last in America. An emerged phenomenon. A fact. Present here as everywhere else, although emerging later than in other countries for the reason that, until five years ago, we thought ourselves rich, and the rich, as always, can afford to be international in a vague and meaningless way.

Nationalism is here in America as it is everywhere else, and it is—again whether you like it or not—the most typical portent and problem of this third decade, conditioning, and overshadowing, and underlying everything else, even Communism, for not a month goes by but Russia becomes more nationalistic and less communistic. The question, therefore, it would seem to me, is what are we going to do with it, now that we have it.

Turn it loose, pretending like the farmer when he first saw a giraffe, that it does not exist, or, by all the means in our power, attempt to keep it sensible and direct it into useful channels? We have a choice. On the one side Hitlerism and race prejudice, and Ku Klux Klanism, and chauvinism, and Little-Americanism not to mention reaction, and on the other, possibly a nationalism that for the first time in our history might bring somewhere near to fruition the American Idea. An idea that has been knocking about at the backs of our heads ever since we began but which, somehow, we have never yet found time to get around to.

This, then, was my thesis, with the added statement that it should not be forgotten, whatever one's ultimate convictions might be, that always the world has needed saints and idealists who, although keeping part of their minds on the future, were none the less willing to work with the materials on hand. And the added statement that nationalism in itself need not necessarily be a bad thing, especially, perhaps, in America.

Nor need it be.

Nationalism is a subjective state of mind. At its best, it means properly cultivating your own garden. Moreover, the only possible hope for an intelligent internationalism in the future is an intelligent nationalism in the present. How can it be otherwise? This presents itself as an inescapable and logical sequence. The Socratian advice that a man's first duty is to know himself, applies equally to a nation, and how can real internationalism be expected from self-deceived nations? That it can't, is shown by the fact that we have never so far had anything but a hypocritical and sentimental internationalism. As for the application of this theory to America, it seems to me clear.

Perhaps because we missed by such a narrow margin being a colony, with all the hampering intellectual conditions which that implies, but more surely because until recently most of our constructive imagination, and most of our poetry, and most of our prophesying have gone into the conquering of half a continent, America, above all nations, has lacked intelligent self-consciousness. There is no country whose citizens, even now, know less about it, or whose citizens—the articulate ones—can make about it more bewildering statements. Even visiting Englishmen have difficulty keeping up with us. And because of this lack of a proper self-consciousness there has never been in history a nation equally great which has cultivated, and still cultivates, although at present in a curious, backhanded fashion, so handsomely a developed inferiority complex — artistically, spiritually, and socially. Nor is it necessary, of course, to point out that the writhing or sullen or boasting humbleness of an inferiority complex has nothing to do with the just prides or just condemnations of intelligent self-consciousness. An inferiority complex is just what it says it is—a complex. A dark and seeping stoppage of the mind; and even more than money it is the root of all evil.

Not that we haven't had our superiority complexes, we have. But these invariably have been founded upon supposed material triumphs such as better business men, or better bathtubs, and now we know we haven't the former, and it is doubtful if we even think we have the latter since the French took universally to plumbing just before we stopped visiting them. What have we then? Nothing? Nothing, that is, except the vestiges of our inferiority complexes disguised in modern dress? It seems to me we have a great deal. Donald Mitchell, a forgotten philosopher, said, "A man is never better than when he has the humblest sense of himself; he is never so unlike the spirit of Evil as when his pride is utterly vanished"; and we have, for the first time, in our history, a real humbleness and a vast and real dissatisfaction. A spiritual humility. A publican state of mind. Which is the exact spot where great art, and great politics, and a fine disgust with conditions are likely to begin.

The stage is set for some sort of magnificence. Whether we will occupy the stage or not, is another thing.

Well, that was my thesis, and my audience when they understood it, didn't like it. To begin with they denied my initial premise. There was no such thing as America. And if a person doesn't feel a land, it is difficult to explain it to him, and if he denies your initial assumption in its entirety, there is no argument. Everything rests on an initial assumption, even the supposedly simple statement that two and two make four. My audience seemed to visualize America merely as a large swamp filled with conflicting races going about their antagonistic pursuits; something prehistoric and amorphous. And this was funny and tragic, because the majority of my audience undoubtedly had never been a hundred miles away from the large seaboard city where they, or their parents, had first landed and stuck, and because, if you choose to regard nations as no more than congeries of individuals, with their conflicting interests and varied racial strains, every nation, however homogeneous (and there is, of course, no

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such thing as a homogeneous nation) is in the same fix, and becoming more so. What, otherwise, are airplanes and steamships and railway trains for? And where, nowadays, are pure-blooded peoples except, possibly, remote peasants or our own Southern mountaineers? And when have the released and educated classes ever done anything else but scour the world for their wives and so begot mongrels, and therefore, leaders?

A nation is merely an idea. It can have no homogeneity biologically. Its only possible centripetal forces are geographic and intellectual and spiritual.

In any case, my audience knew nothing of America . . . its infinite variety and curious cohesion; its powers of assimilation, once you got away from stagnant pools of population. Its color, and magnificence, and excitement. And if anything, it knew even less about the American idea. My audience only knew that it did not like the adjective, or the noun, American. And so there suddenly came to me an illumination. A summation and sharpening of thoughts that had been troubling me for a long time. An illumination valuable, pathetic, and a little frightening.

These people . . . and there were millions of them, and they bred . . . hated America, yet they were Americans. And the especial bafflement lay in the fact that there was nothing you you could offer them in American shape. No discussion possible so long as you wrapped it up in an American package. For example, you could say to them, "Look! I am as red as Lenin, but I want an American form of communism." Calverton has done that—and they would not listen. Or you could say—at least, to some of them, "Look! I am as black as Hitler," with the same result. They did not wish, nor would they aid, any amelioration of American conditions upon American terms. They wished to build nothing from American foundations. What they wanted to do was to write an American history with Washington, and Lincoln, and the Declaration of Independence, and the Civil War, and three hundred years of tradition, colonial or national, left out. That was their fundamental, if unconscious, desire; they and their present prophets. Prophets who, obscenely and perversely, with a sort of indescribable mental castration, are, for the most part, Americans of a totally different stamp.

But I did not indict these people in my mind. I indicted their manners and their totalitarianism, but not their point of view. Their point of view was largely our own fault—the fault of the older Americans. Especially the fault of the American intellectual. The teachers, the writers, the painters, the musicians, the newspapermen. And the fault of the released American. The American of the upper classes, the American who, owing everything to America, gives back nothing in return, not even lip service. Where had the intellectual explained America to these people, and where had the upper class American, save here or there, given them an example?

As for the rest, Louis Adamic who, besides other evidences of genius, has had the genius, despite all the handicaps we set in the way, to become, himself, an American, has explained the predicament. These people represent our latest immigration, an immigration alien and not easily assimilable, and we have met them with contempt and the offer of an unenlightened, harsh Americanism. We have cut off at the roots their traditional cultures and have given them nothing in return. They are neither fowl, flesh, nor good red herring. They are no longer their old selves, and they have not become Americans. They are nothing, for you cannot shake a man's faith in his old earth and race and expect him to have faith in his new race or in the new earth where he finds himself. But, like nationalism, which is the reverse of their attitude, these people represent, as I have said, an emerged phenomenon, and pretty soon we will have to do something about them. We have sown the dragon's teeth.

Such was my audience and its response, and as I went downtown in a subway whose passengers were as motley as a beggar's carnival, I brooded upon the problem of these new Americans and upon related problems. I wondered, for instance, why, all through its history, so many Americans—Americans of every class—had hated America. Was it a misunderstanding of democracy; its inevitable slow and faltering progress; its inevitable uglinesses side by side with its steadily increasing finenesses? Was it merely the size of the country and the resulting ignorance and provincialism? And I wondered why, even when they didn't dislike America, even when they thought they had discovered it, as so many of them think they have nowadays, even when it was fashionable to discover America, as recently it has become, the majority of American intellectuals, of American artists, still insisted upon discovering only a fragment. The flat, garish, fragment of strident colors and shrieking sound, un-tender and uncharming, denying all the rest of the vast subtle land. I wondered why they wanted to discover only this fragment. Or rather, why they wanted to deny the rest, knowing nothing about it.

This was not the total of America as I knew it. It was not even the total of the great centers of strident color and shrieking sound. It was not even the total of this particular city of breathless canyons in which I found myself. I knew better, for I had touched, seen, smelled, and heard.

There were a score of paradoxes for any one who wanted to wonder.

Why, for instance, there was in America more than in any other country this separation between intellectual and artist, on the one hand, and, on the other, the simple American, the quiet civilized American. A separation, and usually, on the part of the intellectual and the artist, a denial. Somewhere in between reality and exaggeration, in a strange, suspended, untouched state, the American artist and intellectual floated, either refusing to believe in what his country possessed or scornful of it. Here was a land—admitting everything you might say against it—that none the less was filled with folk music, and folk tradition, and folk sagas, and folk things made with the hand, and lovely, shy, remote places; and here, at the other extreme, was a land, because of its size, if nothing else, endowed, perhaps, with more than an average share of gentle and amiable and at the same time powerful people, and yet none of these things existed so far as they appeared in American music, or painting, or writing. If they were mentioned at all, it was with scepticism or patronage. Only the wicked and uncouth were described with respect. Most of the American intellectuals still believed that all American music was black, that all Americans except themselves were dishonest, and still—turn-

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ing their backs upon any public demonstrations of their own folk-ways as being mercenary—continued ingenuously to lose their hearts to such, of course, uncommercialized products as Russian ballets, French ballad singers, and Spanish dancers.

America, as I saw it, was a large extemporaneous land, jocose and serious, beautiful and disgusting, gentle and cruel, distinguished by its gusto, once you left over-worked and over-serious New York behind; with a maze of color and sound and texture, all merging into certain dominant notes, audible and observable to the observant. A land more especially marked than any other save Russia by the number of its inarticulate poets and musicians, most of whom were selling hair brushes or bonds. And how could you have any full-armed art unless in the blood and bones and mind of the artist there was a feeling for all this? A respect for it merely as a human and natural demonstration, if nothing else. Unless there was, in short, that infiltration of country that must always be there? That fusion. That unconscious, self-conscious impulse. That hatred—at times—because an entity, a personality, an individuality you cherish . . . your own land . . . falls so far behind what it should be and, as often, a gusty pride in its beauty and fineness.

When has great art ever been founded on ignorance of country, or scorn of it, or national timidity?

That was it, possibly . . . the underlying fault. Few Americans as yet regarded America as an entity, an individual, as Englishmen regarded England, or Frenchmen, France. An entity to be loved apart from the particular generation inhabiting it.

And it was this same strange separation and denial—denial of fact, denial of responsibility—that had marked more than any other class of its kind in the world, the released class in America. The Americans America had especially favored and made especially rich. Odd, too, because—as a whole—in its private lives and public charities this class had been anything but irresponsible. Only toward its country had it denied responsibility, even the slight responsibility of good manners where America was concerned.

Where did you find another supposedly super-civilized class asking so many embarrassing questions or scattering abroad—usually the females of it—to an eagerly responsive world so much expatriated nonsense? In what other country, to epitomize an attitude, were visiting foreigners asked "what they thought of the country"? . . . what they thought of America. The flat, general, leering question. An intimate question, very much like asking a stranger what he thinks of your mother. She may be a sot or a beldame but you do not ask strangers such a question. And nice foreigners were embarrassed—naturally.

And where did you find another class of power and wealth which, without proper investigation and certainly without deep thought or reflection, so automatically resisted and resented the mere suggestion of decent progress? Or which, in the face of the admirable fortitude of the country as a whole, had exhibited a more dismaying attitude?

The very class that most admired the supposed English sense of national responsibility, admiring vociferously and without discrimination, was, in America, the very class which exhibited the least responsibility toward its own.

It is necessary, I perceive, to make myself utterly clear. I do not mean that any man should relinquish a single belief, however foolish. That is not it. Rather it is a question of direction, of mental and spiritual slant, of attitude. A question, whether one be a tory or a radical, of putting one's country first and oneself second. And this, let it be remarked, is also, at its lowest, no more than intelligent selfishness, for gangrene in the foot, unless checked, will most certainly sooner or later reach the head.

* * *

The subway slid like a phosphorescent worm beneath the sleeping, or drinking, or love-making bodies of thousands of Americans.

Aristocracies, financial or otherwise, I told myself, had no excuse save for their implied sense of responsibility toward their own class and their country. Otherwise, even the most ornamental of them were not ornamental enough. And our financial aristocracy during the last five years had registered against itself a sad commentary. It had shown no responsibility toward itself, for it had not hesitated to make itself absurd and contemptible, and it had shown no responsibility as a whole toward its country. It was fortunate that the rest of the country was far-flung, and, on the whole, calm, and, on the whole, self-contained.

And finally, and as a gauge of this attitude, for fiction is usually an accurate gauge of the educated viewpoint of the moment, I thought of present-day American fiction.

One would surmise that never before had the American field been so cleared for typical and, at the same time, deeply impregnated national work, and yet so far such work had not been forthcoming. We still evaded the issue; the core—the heart of the thing. We had at last, to be sure, discovered our own idiom, we were no longer under the influence of Europe, but we had not as yet become American in any full-fledged, rounded sense. We had not, that is, as yet learned to use our material. Better novels were being written in the United States than ever before in its history, better novels were being written in the United States, probably, than anywhere else, but so far they had all been either provincial or fragmentary. Not one of them had expressed America in the way that Dostoievsky had expressed Russia; Balzac, France; Dickens, England. There was still that curious shame-faced, bitter handling of American character and the American scene. Communist critics no doubt would say that this was because the novelist, consciously or unconsciously, was aware of the breaking down of historic systems, but this, like most communistic criticism, was pure nonsense. Whether systems broke down or not, men were still men, and women were still women, and the essential background of a country did not change. The communistic Russian was not a good novelist, but, on the other hand, he had never shown any signs of hating Russia or his fellow countrymen. He hated an opposing social system, not his land or his race.

But what had happened to us?

After ten years of satire, and very brilliant satire, and much needed satire, for we had then been at the height of our superiority complex of better business men and better bathtubs, we had emerged into two distinct schools; the school of abnormal psychology, now a little demoded, and the newer school of nostalgia; with, dimly on the

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horizon, and just when we might have become really American, the threat of a third school—the school of proletarian literature, whatever that may mean in any literary sense. The first—the school of abnormal character or circumstance—needed no discussion. In some ways it had been a very fine school artistically, and perhaps, in a limited sense, even necessary and salutary as national criticism, but obviously it was also a narrow school and not fair if taken literally.

No one would contradict Boileau's statement that "Nothing is beautiful but truth, and truth alone is beautiful," but truth is a large continent, and there are many trade routes to it, and I, for one, had never been able to force myself to believe, even in my most enthusiastic and broad-minded moments, that a lecherous eye for one's grandmother was the whole of America. Neither did I think the present so popular school of nostalgia the whole of America. It was based, this school, on a wistful and tragic misunderstanding, and again our intellectuals and artists were responsible and our released classes, with their refusal to adopt even a trace of the heroic rôle.

Obviously the public, satiated by too thick a brew of original sin, were yearning once more for a few people who exhibited at least faint symptoms of compunction and humanity and courage. But how could the public be fed? Like Mother Hubbard our cupboard was bare. For too long the intellectual and the artist had been telling the public that there was no such thing as "a nice person," a humane person, in modern America, and so every one, public and writer, was being forced back to periods in which only the dead could contradict them. Sometime before the Civil War, preferably. And if the scene could be set in the South, the argument was won. The same South, let it be noted, now inhabited solely by incestuous swamp-dwellers.

It is only when one has a grandfather in the house that one doubts the perfection of the past.

As for the threat of the proletarian school of literature, that, due to present propaganda and the at present confused state of the critical mind, necessitated a lengthy discussion, but briefly this could be said about it. The whole theory rested upon a gigantic and sentimental logical and artistic fallacy. You could make an American workingman your hero, but not the American working class . . . at least, not for long. Causes, classes, and cataclysms changed over night and sooner or later dated themselves. War literature was an example of this. If you made a cause, a class, or a cataclysm your protagonist, you did so only at the risk of writing the most ephemeral of fiction. All artists, to be sure, were rebels, but their rebellion was of a kind that puzzled and enraged the professional revolutionist. Involuntarily the artist revolted against any undue exercise of power no matter where exercised and so had a disconcerting habit of leaving a revolution just when it became successful. Nor was it the revolt of an artist—of a Shelley, or a Wordsworth, or a Dickens, or a Tolstoy—that one remembered, but his universal interest in that sole perpetual mutability, the human individual. That, and the real artist's passionate attempts to extend the vague horizons of lucidity and beauty.

Meanwhile, whatever you thought, and however you wrote, there was America to be written about. And there was this new nationalism to be studied and safeguarded. And there were thousands—millions—of Americans like those of my audience. And there was something like a tocsin sounding; a tocsin for the released classes to make themselves worthy of their privileges, and a tocsin for the artist and the intellectual to discover passionately his own country.

But Americans were a queer people. All through their history they had been distinguished by their obstinacy in evading slyly, adroitly, and circuitously, or arrogantly and sneeringly, the task of being American. I wished that they would grow up. What could one say to them in a single sentence? To cultivate the habit of deep thought which, in its turn, so often engenders the habit of deep feeling?

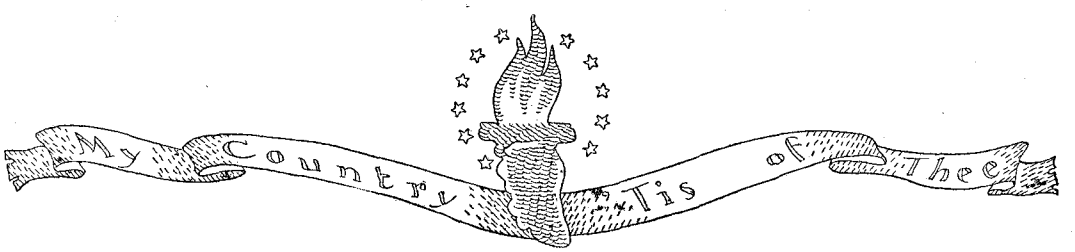
. . . The habit of deep thought, and its *alter ego,* the habit of a deep and brooding observation.

* * *

The subway train stopped at my station, and I got out and walked up the stairs in the stale air, heavy like the breath of a sleeping giant, and along the canyon of the street, deserted at this hour. Every now and then the flaming arrow of a taxi shot by. . . . Well, here was something, anyhow. There was always the younger generation.

No one knew what the younger generation thought as yet; the real younger generation. It had not spoken, except spasmodically, but I suspected, and from somewhat intimate knowledge, that when it did, it would say things in music, and painting, and writing that had not been said before; at least, not in America. And the real younger generation was not the so-called "younger generation," of course; the generation which now had full command of publicity. It never is. The so-called "younger generation" was composed for the most part of fairly weary men and women over thirty. Or over forty. I had several friends over forty who still thought they belonged to the younger generation, a delusion that grew upon them when they drank. When the real younger generation spoke, the "younger generation" would be surprised.

The sky was filled with signs and portents. Even the dark canyon of the street began to glitter with them.



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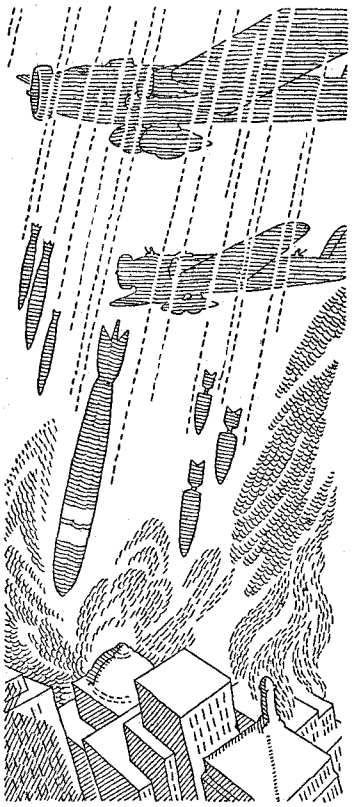
Is Man Improving?

By C. E. M. Joad

In previous papers on this subject a churchman, Abbé Dimnet, and a radical, Robert Briffault, have presented individual and social views of the problem. Here an English philosopher and writer states his views of the contrast between scientific and social "progress"



THE question, like those with which hecklers at meetings tease speakers—"Have you stopped beating your wife yet?"—is strictly unanswerable. The affirmative answer, that is to say, is demonstrably as false as the negative. Am I an improvement on Neanderthal man, or a paleolithic savage, or an Australian bushman? Obviously I am. Am I an improvement on Buddha, Socrates, Plato, Virgil, Leonardo da Vinci, Bacon, Newton? Probably some would say certainly I am not. But when, eliminating myself, I consider the whole mass of my contemporaries and ask whether they are superior to the masses of ancient Athenians, Hindus, Romans, or Renaissance Italians, I can find no clear answer. It all depends on what you mean by superior, that is to say, by "improved."

On the one hand, I can move rapidly and comfortably over the earth's surface, and enjoy the benefits of the radio, the hot bath, and a plumbing so efficient that it has fortified my nose for all time against the assaults of smells and my person against the risk of typhoid; on the other it seems only too likely that the main ground of my belief in the "improvement" of myself and my contemporaries is the fact that a number of scientific inventions has enabled the society to which I belong to mistake speed and comfort for civilization. Though my nose is immune, the daily assaults upon my ears of petrol engines, motor horns, electric drills, elevators, and vacuum cleaners are such as to reduce me to a nervous wreck, if I venture to sleep for more than a few nights in those supreme embodiments of our civilization, the hotels of London and New York, in which our "improvement" might have been supposed to have received its most unmistakable and triumphant expression.

Has, then, a civilization which has saved its nose at the expense of its ears improved? It all depends, I repeat, upon what you mean by "improved." "Improvement" implies progress, but you cannot say "so and so has progressed," unless you know where so and so is going, or ought to be going. Similarly, you cannot say that man has "improved" unless you are prepared to define what sort of being man ought to become. Progress, "improvement"—the fact is obvious—imply not only change but direction, and the notion of direction implies a goal. If I place myself in 38th Street between Madison and Fifth Avenues and set my legs in motion, there is movement, there is change, but, until I know whether I want to go to Madison Avenue or to Fifth Avenue, it is impossible to say whether I have progressed or not.

The point, I repeat, is obvious. Yet it is constantly overlooked. Puffed up with the pride of mechanical achievement, we habitually regard our age as the most progressive, our generation as the most "improved," that the world has yet seen. But do we know where we are going? Can we describe, can we even tentatively envisage our goal? Emphatically we cannot. A society of "improved" mankind would, we may suppose, contain more Happiness, more Goodness, more Beauty, more Truth, than our society; it would consist of human beings more fully developed in personality than ourselves; they would also be economically comfortable, secure from the fear of poverty or want, not overworked. . . . To so much, I imagine, most of us would agree. But when we demand what is meant by Beauty, what form of Happiness we propose to stipulate and how much of it we are prepared to sacrifice for a little virtue; when we ask how the economic comfort and security of all is to be realized, our contemporaries—the fact is, alas, too obvious—respond with a chorus of disagreement.

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Whether we are to have more law or less law, more government or less; whether passion is to be unrestrained in the interests of the Freudian development of a full personality, or whether it is to be intellectualized into a virgin asceticism in the interests of intellectual endeavor and spiritual refinement; whether we are to move ever more rapidly in an ever greater number of mechanisms propelled by petrol over the surface of the earth; or whether we should come at last to rest, contemplate our navels, and listen to the music of the spheres; whether we should love everybody with Christ in the interests of universal charity, or spare nobody with Nietzsche and the Nazis in the interests of the superman and the super-race; whether liberty and democracy are outmoded superstitions or the bulwarks of civilization against the oncoming floods of barbarian dictatorships; whether religion is the opium of the people or the approach of man to God; these, which raise questions of ultimate goals, are precisely the questions in regard to which we differ most. Until they are settled, any definite answer to the question "Is man improving?" can only supply the place of ignorance by converting conjecture into dogma. Having said so much to warn my readers that the question at issue can only be begged, not answered, I shall now proceed to beg it in my own way.

II

I begin by pointing out a distinguishing feature of our civilization from which, as it seems to me, most of our more familiar troubles spring. This is its lopsidedness. It is lopsided because of the disparity between our mechanical skill and scientific knowledge on the one hand and our political and social wisdom on the other, between our power over Nature and the use to which we put it. Science has given us powers fit for the gods; yet we bring to their use the mentality of schoolboys. Look at that mechanic by the roadside mending the carburetor of his car. In knowledge of mechanics and electricity, and in skill in its application, he is behaving rather like a superman. Look at the same mechanic ten minutes later driving in a little hell of noise and stench in the apparent belief that sixty miles an hour is ten times more wonderful than six miles an hour, and that six hundred miles an hour is practically the same as heaven, unable to appreciate the countryside himself and spoiling the appreciation of all who are unfortunate enough to come near him, he is behaving like a congenital idiot! Or consider the miracle of the radio. Men of genius by the dozen, men of talent by the hundred have labored in order that wireless might be. They succeeded, and with what result? The tittle-tattle of the divorce court is broadcasted to the remote Pacific, the air vibrates with the praises of toothpaste, while the ultimate ether quivers to the strains of jazz.

This contrast between the marvel of our scientific achievement and the ignominy of our social childishness meets us at every turn. Just think of the things that science has enabled us to do. We can talk across continents and oceans, telegraph pictures, install wireless sets in the home, listen in Ceylon to Big Ben striking in London, ride above and beneath the earth and the sea. Children can talk along wires, typewriters are silent, teeth-filling painless, liners have swimming-baths, crops are ripened by electricity, roads are made of rubber, X-rays are the windows through which we behold our insides, photographs speak and sing, murderers are tracked down by wireless, hair is waved by electrical current, submarines go to the North Pole, airplanes to the South Pole . . . yet, we cannot, to take a simple example, in the midst of our enormous cities provide a little space where poor children may play in comfort and safety, with the result that the number of persons killed by automobiles in my own small country alone runs already into well over 6000 a year. As an Indian philosopher said to me recently, in acid comment upon my conventional praise of the wonders of our civilization: "Yes, you can fly in the air like birds and swim in the sea like fishes; but how to walk upon the earth you do not yet know."

For this disparity there are, I believe, a number of reasons. I select one as particularly pertinent to my present purpose. When I was an undergraduate at Oxford I received the education appropriate to a member of the British governing classes, of whom, it was then hoped, I would one day be a member. This education included, rightly in my view, two years' intensive study of philosophy, in the course of which I encountered the philosopher Aristotle, a Greek with an inquiring turn of mind, of, indeed, an omnivorous curiosity, who wrote books about physics, biology, astronomy, zoology, grammar. He also wrote a treatise on ethics, the nature of the good life for the individual, and on politics, the nature of the good life for communities. Now although nobody expected me to read anything that Aristotle had to say on the subject of physics, biology, of astronomy, or the other sciences, I was expected to master every one of his precepts on the subjects of Ethics and Politics. The inference is irresistible. It is not thought necessary for me to know Greek science because our own has enormously outstripped it: Greek science is in fact obsolete. But in our knowledge of the good life for the individual and for the community, we have not, it would seem, "improved" on the Ancient Greeks. Nor, while we continue to venerate their writings, as if they contained the sum of moral and political wisdom, and base upon them, as we do in England, the education of our governing classes, is "improvement" in these matters likely.

Here, then, is my first conclusion. In knowledge of the forces of Nature, in skill in exploiting these forces for human betterment, man has "improved" beyond all reckoning. In respect of the ends for which he uses his powers, in his knowledge of how to live both as an individual and as a citizen he has at least not "improved" upon the Ancient Greeks.

III

Let us now consider our question in the light of some contemporary applications of my generalization. I will select three.

(1) First there is the fact, the all too familiar fact, that our productive skill has, thanks to science, so outstripped our political wisdom that we are unable to distribute the things which science has enabled us to produce, and are in a fair way to ruining ourselves through our inability to meet the challenge of our own prodigious productivity. The intensive application of physical and chemical science to industry has in recent years enormously increased man's productive power. Men

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should be, in consequence, richer and their toil lighter. Nothing of the kind has occurred. Our social science lags so far behind our physical and chemical sciences, that we are increasingly unable to distribute the goods we so abundantly produce. Prices fall for want of buyers; manufacturers are ruined because they cannot dispose of their products; the world's granaries burst with unsold wheat, its quays and warehouses are stacked with rotting fish and fruit, and in all countries men are thrown out of employment because none can buy the proceeds of their labor. Thus arises the great paradox of modern civilization, the paradox of want in the midst of plenty.

For it is not true that human beings do not need what science enables them to produce. We hear, on the one hand, that Brazil has been destroying its surplus coffee by burning it; yet men still shiver in the European winters and crave the hot drink they cannot buy. The production of wheat in the United States has been curtailed, yet the masses of China are still half-starved, and thousands at the moment of writing are said to be dying of starvation. As part of his great recovery program President Roosevelt was driven to bribe American cotton planters to plough up their land instead of planting it; yet most of the women of the world still suffer from a lack of adequate underclothes. We are, it seems, so little able to control the results of our inventive skill, that our civilization is in danger of collapse because we produce so much of the very things we need.

When I was in Russia the walls of the factories exhibited a poster depicting this latest and greatest paradox of civilization. Picture a British miner's home in the depths of winter. The grate is empty, and a little girl in rags asks her mother why they cannot have a fire. "Because, my dear, there is no coal." "Why is there no coal, Mother?" "Because Daddy is out of work and there is no money to buy coal." "Why is Daddy out of work?" "Because there is too much coal. . . ."

Here, then, is the first result of man's lopsided development. His scientific "improvement" is so great, his social and political "improvement" so small, that his economic machine is in danger of running itself to a standstill because, having acquired the skill to produce more than enough goods for all, he has not learned the wisdom to distribute them.

IV

(2) The second application of my generalization may be stated in a sentence. Unless man "improves" in political wisdom he will destroy himself and his civilization in the next war.

Science does not change human desires. It merely makes it easier for human beings to satisfy the desires they already have. It does not alter human purposes; it merely facilitates the realization of the purposes men already set themselves. In so far as these desires and purposes are good, the added power of realization is a good; in so far as they are harmful, it is correspondingly a harm. Now there is a certain group of human desires whose collective expression is undeniably harmful. They are the desires of groups of men for power over other men; of peoples for the exploitation of undeveloped peoples; of nations for dominance over other nations. They are desires based upon fear and nourished by pride. It was these desires which led to the last war, and which, coupled with the desire for revenge, seem in a fair way to bring on the next. Now the last war showed that modern man, when terror and pugnacity have stripped away the surface of his civilization, has "improved" so little that he can still on occasion behave like a paleolithic savage. The war showed him, no doubt, at his most glorious, capable of ennobling heroisms and supreme sacrifices. It showed him also vain, gullible, credulous, boastful, cruel, revengeful, malicious. Now modern science has taken this "unimproved" paleolithic savage posturing as civilized man, and endowed him with a terrifying destructiveness. He is, for example, so "improved" in respect of his ability to devise contrivances for blowing people to pieces and choking them with poison gas by bombs dropped from the skies, yet so little in his ability to control his contrivances, that the next war will probably see the destruction from the air of most of his capital cities.[1]

[1] Those who are interested in knowing precisely how this will be done are recommended to read *What will be the Character of the Next War* written by eighteen experts in various forms of scientific warfare.

The moral is devastatingly simple. Give a schoolboy an airgun and he may break a few windows or shoot a few sparrows; give him a modern Lee-Metford rifle and you transform him into a public danger. You don't give your children dangerous toys until they are old enough to manage them; you don't present the baby with a box of matches. Hence, it is not necessary to show that mankind has fallen below his previous level, if he is to escape destruction; it is sufficient to point to the obvious fact that he has a need to rise very far above it. Unless he can learn the political wisdom to live at peace with his neighbor and to transcend his fanatical nationalist loyalties; unless, in a word, the world's unitary economic structure can be matched with a unitary political structure, I can see an epitaph for "unimproved" man being written in the following terms. For reasons which will shortly be obvious, I am forced to take this epitaph from the work of a Martian historian. I quote, therefore, the following page from a history written on the planet Mars in the year 10,000 P.M.I. (post Martem incarnatum).

"On our neighboring planet, the Earth, the age of the Mesozoic reptiles was succeeded by that of the vertebrate mammals. Of these the *hominidæ*, although a comparatively feeble species, endowed with so meager a physical equipment that it was only by covering themselves with the skins of other animals that they were able to protect themselves against the vagaries of the climate, were nevertheless enabled, by virtue of their possession of a low-grade cunning, in which pessimistic writers have seen some resemblance to our Martian intelligence, to establish a complete domination over the whole of the rest of the planet. This they utilized for the purpose of preying upon all the other forms of life which the earth contained, either for the purposes of sustenance, or, increasingly, as their civilization developed, in the interests of what they called 'sport.' So destructive were the *hominidæ* that they would ultimately have succeeded in denuding the planet of all other forms of life, were it not that their energies were wasted by the internecine feuds upon which their quarrelsome nature led them to indulge among themselves. The domination of the *hominidæ* was finally

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terminated by their discovery of how to release the forces locked up in the atom, a discovery which they speedily utilized to exterminate themselves altogether. The destruction of this noxious species through their own unaided mischievousness has always been regarded by Martian theologians as affording one of the strongest pieces of evidence for the divine government of the universe."

V

(3) The third application of my generalization relates to the use of leisure. Let us suppose that "improving" man escapes the dangers at which I have glanced; that he neither turns himself into cannon fodder in the next war nor starves himself in peace through his inability to distribute the goods with which science has so embarrassingly endowed him. Let us suppose further that his present awkward economic corner is duly turned and that science's great gift of machines is used not, as it is at present, to keep a diminishing number of human beings as hard at work as ever while assigning the rest to the unemployed scrap-heap, but to lighten the toil of all, while providing all with a livelihood. "Improving" man may on these terms look forward to a reasonably secure economic future in which he is assured of comfort and an economic competence in return for four or five hours machine minding a day. How, *given his present conceptions of leisure-using,* would he employ the vast tracts of leisure thereby placed at his disposal?

To answer this question, we must, I think, envisage a world in which whatever land is left over from cultivation is covered with a network of golf courses, tennis courts, or whatever kind of ground the popular game of the future demands. The world's roads will be covered by a solid mass of automobiles welded together in a stationary and inextricable jam. Its coastlines will be ringed with a continuous series of resorts, at which jazz bands will discourse negroid music to tired sportsmen. A deluge of news, carefully chewed in order not to excite thought and warranted not to arouse comment, will descend upon the defenseless heads of the community by every device of television and telephotony that the science of the future may have been able to perfect. Man, "improved" scientifically out of all proportion to his spiritual "improvement," will rush to embrace all manner of esoteric creeds and cults in the vain endeavor to find sustenance for his starved soul. Women will follow great white masters into the desert. . . . Ultimately, unless man's knowledge of living can rise to the level of his "improved" means of life, he will be driven to make existence hard, adventurous, even dangerous again in despair of making it tolerable without the hard labor to which he has been accustomed.

All this presumes, let me repeat, the dominance of present conceptions of leisure-using. What are these? They reduce in the main to three. First, reliance upon entertainment. Man has "improved" so little in the art of entertaining himself, that he has to hire other people to do his entertaining for him. Hence arises the characteristic modern notion of leisure as an occasion for spending money. Leisure, in fact, is something for which one pays. And, as man increasingly "improves," increasingly he pays machines. To look at and listen to moving and speaking photographs, to insert coins into metal slots, to crowd through clicking turnstiles, scan headlines, hurl oneself over the surface of the earth or through the air in mechanisms propelled by petrol —these are characteristic conceptions of the uses of leisure provided by machines, uses which for most men are also ideals.

Secondly, there is the ideal of movement, preferably rapid. Modern man is so lacking in instinctive contentment that he must be continuously in motion in the belief, the surprisingly humble belief, that any place is better than the place in which he happens to be. In Europe before the depression we became accustomed to the spectacle of a stream of rich Americans continually in transit across the Atlantic, escaping, it seemed, from something which lay in wait for them on whichever side of the Atlantic they happened to be. This something was boredom proceeding from an inability to meet the challenge of a life which, freed from the necessity of getting the means to make life possible, could be devoted entirely to the art of living.

The third ideal consists of whacking about little round pieces of matter with long thin ones in the shape of bats, clubs, cues, rackets, sticks, mallets, or whatever kind of implement will most effectively displace the round pieces of matter upon which it impinges. These activities are comprised under the general title of "playing games."

Now these pursuits dispassionately considered are the pursuits of children. To conceive them indulged in by any of the great men of the past to whom we agree to pay the lip-service of reverence, by Buddha, let us say, or Socrates, by Plato, Bacon, Leonardo, Kant, Washington, or Bach, is to realize the measure of their immaturity. It is also to realize how little man has "improved" in the art of leisure-using, which is also the art of life.

Nor should this immaturity occasion surprise. Modern man has been forced to devote three-fourths of his waking hours to obtaining the means to make life possible. He has had only one-quarter left for living. To the art of living, at once the most difficult and the most important of all the arts, he has brought tired brains and jaded energies and the fag ends of days devoted to obtaining the wherewithal to live. Is it any wonder that he is a shocking bungler in the art of living through sheer lack of practice; that having "improved" out of all knowledge in his mastery of the *means,* he is still very much where the Greeks left him in his knowledge of the *ends,* of life. Yet it is precisely this art that he must learn if his "improvement" is to continue, if only because the leisure which science seems likely to win for him will prove unendurable unless it is learned.

For the machines, and the movement, and the impact of matter upon matter, tolerable enough as a brief respite from monotonous and routine employment, would become frankly intolerable as the staple occupations of life. How intolerable the restless boredom of the unemployed rich, who throng the coasts of the French Riviera, flitting from sunbathing to polo, from a motor rally to a cocktail party, from the play to a roulette table and then again to the play, from dancing to a party and from that to another party, finding a stimulus that ever weakens in each, seeking a contentment that ever eludes them in all, affords a melancholy testimony. I speak only of what I know, but it

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would not surprise me to learn that Miami and Pasadena could point a similar moral. It is, I think, not entirely without significance that the suicide rate among the unemployed rich is the highest of that of any economic class in the world; much higher than the suicide rate among the unemployed poor in my own country. In a word, whereas the average human being who has some knowledge of the art of life is reasonably contented, unless he has some positive reason for discontent, the average mood born of contemporary conceptions of leisure-using in those who are unfortunate enough to be driven to rely upon them for sixteen hours out of every twenty-four seems to be one of discontent, unless there is some positive reason for contentment. Hence, they are driven to manufacture positive reasons in the shape of the rapid transfer of their bodies from place to place, the employment of machines, or the impact of matter upon matter at which I have glanced.

VI

This is not the place for a dissertation upon the right uses of leisure. I have been concerned merely to illustrate my thesis that man, "improved" in his mastery of the means to the good life, is still comparatively "unimproved" in respect of the art of living. A word may, however, be added in regard to two elements which seem to me to be integral to the right conduct of life. Since I believe that mankind has at certain periods in the past exhibited a more lively apprehension of the importance of these elements than he does in the modern world, their introduction is strictly relevant to our question, "Is man improving?"

Through the recorded sayings and writings of those who in the past have spoken and written memorably about life, the sages, seers, and philosophers, the novelists, essayists, and teachers of the world, there runs, in spite of superficial differences, a certain consensus of agreement upon one point. The good life, they assert, consists in the exercise of our highest faculties tuned up to concert pitch upon an appropriate subject matter, interspersed with intervals of recreation in art, music and nature, and the conversation of one's friends. The hint conveyed in this teaching, so far as it concerns our present purpose, is that leisure, in order to be tolerable, must involve the expenditure of effort. The belief that human beings can obtain satisfaction except for very short periods from entertainment, relaxation, or the gratification of the senses is a delusion. Those who conduct their lives on this assumption rapidly find that servitude to the need for amusement is the most burdensome of all the forms of slavery to which men have hitherto subjected themselves. Work, in fact, is the only form of occupation which human beings have hitherto been able to stand in any but the smallest doses. The change which the leisure-using of the future, made possible by the proper utilization of machines, should introduce is not a change from work to idleness but a change from work which is compulsory to work which is self-chosen, from work which is boring to work which is congenial. In the effort to write, to paint a picture, or to compose music, to penetrate the hidden nature of matter, to unravel the mystery of living things, or to comprehend the plan and nature of the universe, to take a hand in the administration of the affairs of one's community, in the solving of its problems or the accommodation of its misfits—in these and a hundred other paths of effort and endeavor are to be found the only tolerable occupations for the leisure of "improved" men.

Secondly, "improved" man, using his leisure rightly, will cultivate what is known as good taste, and good taste, in spite of the common belief to the contrary, is not instinctive but acquired. All native tastes are bad. The taste of the young in music is abominable, in literature execrable. The first cigarette disagrees with us; my children abominate claret; young men prefer new cocktails to old brandy; most of the world's great music should never be heard for the first time. Good taste, in fact, grows slowly through effort and endeavor, the effort to understand what is beyond us, the endeavor to appreciate what we cannot yet understand. It depends on our willingness to begin by being bored with what is good in order that we may become bored with what is bad and so demand something better. In short, it is born of faith, the faith that the kingdom of Beauty can neither be purchased by dollars nor taken by storm, but must be approached by a process of trial and error, a willingness to learn, and the humility which is prepared to accept on faith and the judgment of others what it cannot yet dare to reject on its own. It is in terms of the acquisition of taste so defined that the "improvement" of men is to be measured. It is only, in other words, in so far as he succeeds in so deepening and refining his spirit that his knowledge of the art of life catches up to his knowledge of the means of living, or—as I put it earlier in this article—in so far as his ethics rise to the level of his science, that modern man can further "improve." Moreover, it is only if he so improves, that his civilization, endowed by science in the future with a leisure no less embarrassing than the goods with which science has dowered it in the present, can survive.

VII

My thesis, is, then, that man has "improved" out of all knowledge in scientific achievement, in mechanical technique, in material accomplishment. He has at last mastered his old enemy, Nature. Nor is this a small thing. Man's existence in the past has been hard and precarious, because of the external forces arrayed against him. His life has been at the mercy of powers which he could not control. His communities have been assailed by disease and pestilence; he has wrung a scanty living from Nature. Today, thanks to science, these adverse factors have been vanquished. Peace and plenty, comfort and a competence, are available for all, if all would only consent to take the gifts which science offers. Man is now the master of his environment. The enemy, in fact, is not now without, but within; it is no longer Nature, but human nature. And the "improvement" in this sphere is, I suggest, still to seek. It is, indeed, so urgently required that, unless we can bring our political and ethical wisdom, our knowledge of how to live in communities and as individuals, up to the level of our scientific technique and material achievement, unless we can distribute our goods, live at peace with our neighbors, learn to use our leisure without becoming a nuisance either to ourselves or to others, our civilization will go the way of its predecessors.

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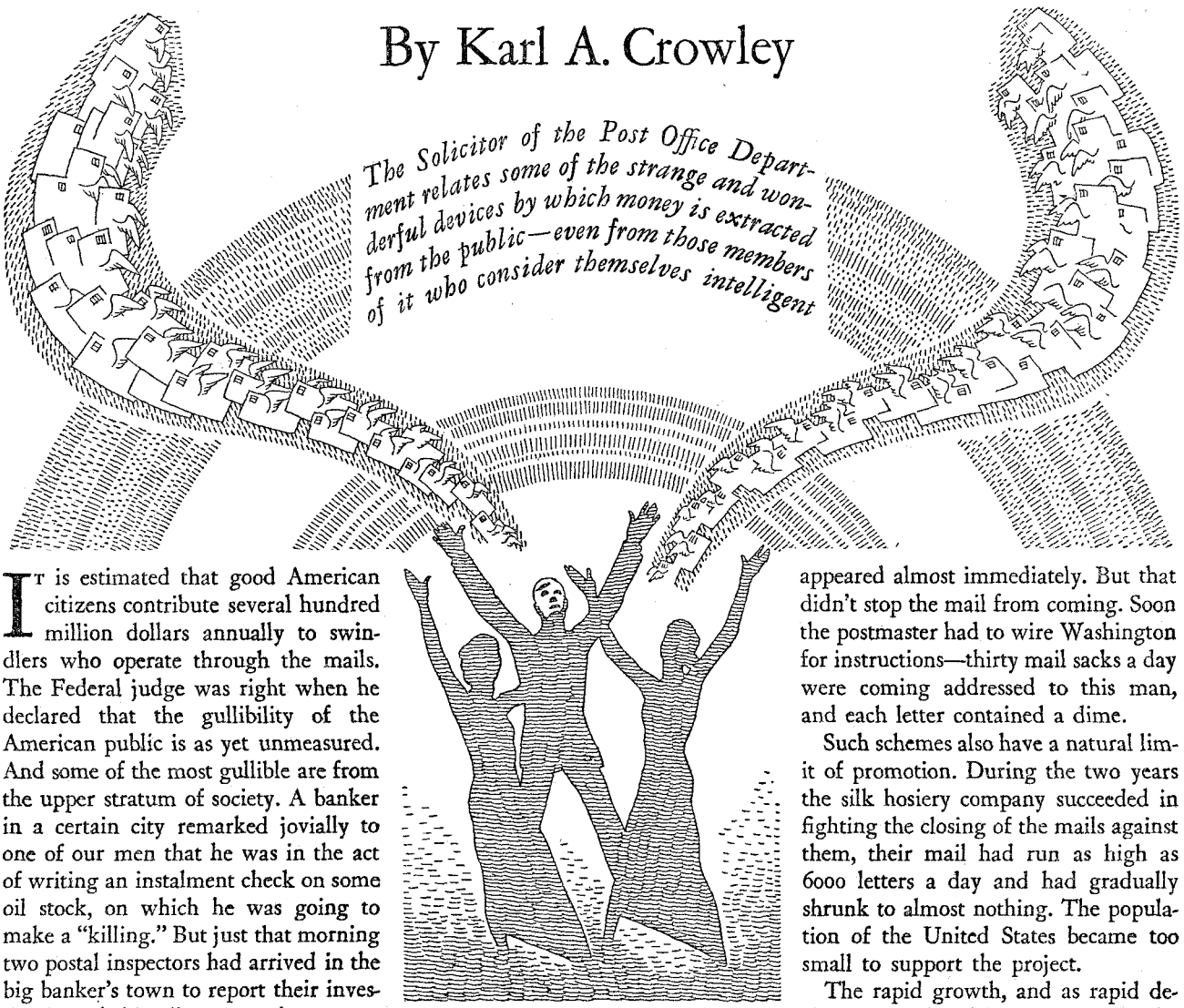
How Gullible Is the Public?

By Karl A. Crowley

The Solicitor of the Post Office Department relates some of the strange and wonderful devices by which money is extracted from the public—even from those members of it who consider themselves intelligent



IT is estimated that good American citizens contribute several hundred million dollars annually to swindlers who operate through the mails. The Federal judge was right when he declared that the gullibility of the American public is as yet unmeasured. And some of the most gullible are from the upper stratum of society. A banker in a certain city remarked jovially to one of our men that he was in the act of writing an instalment check on some oil stock, on which he was going to make a "killing." But just that morning two postal inspectors had arrived in the big banker's town to report their investigation of this oil company!

Perhaps the logical place to begin a story of mail frauds is with those schemes that appeal to the desire to get something for nothing. Take, for example, the endless chain scheme which held out the lure of "$10 worth of hosiery for $1." John Smith sent in four dollars for four coupons. In turn he sold three to his friends. When they invested their four dollars each with the company then Smith received the $10 worth of promised hosiery. By the time this gamble had extended out to only the fifteenth link, those represented by this link could not win the $10 prize until additional investors to the number of 1,549,681,956 could be found to advance, in turn, the sum of $4,649,045,868. And this hosiery lure is only one of many similar sales schemes that have been worked.

An endless chain is easily started, and runs almost of itself. There was the lone promoter whose plan called for a person to invest a dime and then to have ten of his friends do likewise, whereupon he would receive a certain article. He disappeared almost immediately. But that didn't stop the mail from coming. Soon the postmaster had to wire Washington for instructions—thirty mail sacks a day were coming addressed to this man, and each letter contained a dime.

Such schemes also have a natural limit of promotion. During the two years the silk hosiery company succeeded in fighting the closing of the mails against them, their mail had run as high as 6000 letters a day and had gradually shrunk to almost nothing. The population of the United States became too small to support the project.

The rapid growth, and as rapid decline, of such schemes is revealed in the very recent furor over dime chain letters. This plan for squandering money and time apparently started in Denver this spring. From there it spread to the west coast and finally to certain main cities throughout the country. But at the time of writing this (the middle of June) the scheme has already died away. It may be conservatively estimated that 20,000,000 pieces of mail were handled in connection with this. While the racket was at its height many letters came to the Solicitor's

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office, about equally divided between those who wished to know whether it was lawful for them to engage in such a project and those who wished to know why the Post Office didn't stop it. The first were informed that it was contrary to the postal lottery and fraud statute. The second were assured that the matter was being cared for by the government. But before legal machinery could really swing into action the fanciful get-rich-quick plan had collapsed of its own top-heaviness.

For quick returns there was the "Genuine Spanish Gold Digger Compass." The scent of gold was supposed to cause the forked ends to dip. At the government hearing the promoter could not tell why it failed to point to the pocketful of gold in the coat of the government investigator nearby. In a similar case the promoter produced a letter from a purchaser who declared he had located $10,000 worth of gold three miles away and only ten feet deep—but that he hadn't had time to begin digging yet! The swindlers found 4000 dupes who gladly parted with $5 each for a gold finder.

During prohibition a Canadian schemer offered to deliver safely to your address "in plain sealed original package, nothing added or taken away, 100 per cent pure, 12 full quarts of Pure Canadian Rye, the beverage of our grandfathers." Introductory price $18. The delivered package contained twelve quarts of roasted rye grain, suitable as a substitute for coffee. Very dry humor!

Such swindles go by the general title of "gyp" merchandise schemes. The crooks reason that the public, in most instances, will not "squeal." Most people feel embarrassed to admit that they were "taken in."

The all-time record in mail fraud is that of a man who operated more than a quarter of a century. His activities included building towns, operating a bank, publishing a woman's journal, organizing a woman's club, promoting oil wells, silver mines, dispensing patent medicine. He never distributed a cent of dividends or profits to any of his thousands of investors, though it is estimated he received approximately $200,000,000 from them. In the bundles of correspondence that came to light in the investigation were found many pathetic notes. An old woman had begun sending money to him about 1904, and now more than a score of years later, remitting $40, she explained: "This check I expect will be the last I can ever help you with—for I am laboring under quite heavy debt, trying to pay up principal and interest on monies hired to invest with you, at previous times, and it is slow work for a woman sixty-three." An old man in the poorhouse, enclosing his last $2, declared that his faith in the ultimate triumph of this promoter was unshaken!

The Estate Fraud is worked by capitalizing a rumor concerning a valuable piece of land in a large city on which it is alleged a long-time lease has expired and which can be returned to the rightful heirs if sufficient funds can be raised for a title search and a court fight. Such rumors have floated down through the years regarding the Trinity Church property in New York, a large section in the business part of Wilmington, and of Philadelphia.

It requires only that the word go out that steps are being taken to settle a certain estate, to cause men and women over the country whose family name is the same as that in which the estate is supposed to be held, to rally with enthusiasm and cash.

An American living in England by the name of Hartzell claimed that the sole surviving heir of Sir Francis Drake had assigned to him an anticipated fortune which was legally entangled. Anyone, Smith, Brown, or Jones, who wished to contribute toward the legal expense of settling the estate would receive a pro rata of the vast inheritance. He claimed the inheritance was worth $22,000,000,000, and declared that the depression

was precipitated by the enormous movement of finances in Great Britain in anticipation of settling the estate.

All donations and all promises of settlement were given under the pledge of "silence, secrecy, and non-disturbance." Thousands of the dupes were actually afraid to tell Government investigators anything, fearing to lose a fortune by so doing. This was one of the chief reasons that the swindle escaped the law so long.

At Hartzell's trial a cart load of receipt stubs was produced from his agents' headquarters. Some 40,000 persons were represented by these receipts, and from a wide sweep of states.

Then there was the resourceful fellow who obtained from books on genealogy the available records regarding the Cook family, for example. He printed this in a cheap volume and prefaced it with a doggerel verse extolling the prowess of this ancient line under the title, "The Battle Hymn of the Cooks." From city directories he drew all the Cooks he could find. To them he wrote offering a work on the notable genealogy of their family —price $10. He did not lack for buyers. When he had exhausted the Cook market, he started all over on another name.

There is a high tide, these depression days, of work-at-home schemes to steal the last dollar, perhaps, that some unemployed person may have. The swindlers make their money by selling equipment for home work at an exorbitant price, often selling, also, a course of instruction. Practically every so-called work-at-home offer that we have examined has been proved a fraud.

The foreign employment swindles flourish today. Work abroad is assured the individual if he will only send in his name—with a fee, of course. He receives, in turn, an application blank. When that is filled and returned, the story ends. The crook has no foreign connections; he may not even have a foreign accent! One scoundrel raked in $5000 a day for a time.

The employment offers are not all foreign, nor prosaic, either. One imaginative promoter urged "ambitious men, no experience necessary," to join the National Intelligence Service, a "nationwide detective organization." The entrance fee was only $20, and included a gold badge. One young fellow went to police headquarters in his city, and displaying his glittering badge, declared he was ready for work. Of course he had equipped himself with a revolver. Result: jailed for carrying a concealed weapon.

Speaking of begging rackets, a shrewd schemer formed the National Disabled Soldiers League, held a fake convention in Atlantic City, and persuaded several state governors to write letters endorsing

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his "philanthropic" objectives. To thousands of select names he wrote, describing the veterans' plight, included a few pencils, and asked for $5. He obtained more than $300,000.

Postal swindlers apparently prefer burnt children. A letter from a so-called sucker list seller in this country, to a group of fraudulent stock operators who had escaped to Mexico, offered them a large list of names of clients who had lost money in a defunct company. This company had exploited virtually the same kind of stock that the crooks in Mexico were about to promote. Many of these people had been repeatedly victimized over a period of years. When a medical swindler is closed out by the Post Office some shady letter-broker calls to buy up his list of names.

A man was on trial in a land-selling scheme. At the morning session of the court one of the victims testified against him. At the noon recess the promoter sold this victim another contract.

It is estimated that there are about 50,000 chronic oil stock suckers who have been buying and losing year after year. One master mind had 300,000 on his list. That total included executives, administrators of estates, bankers, preachers, and other professional people.

When we compel a swindler to show cause why he should not be deprived of the use of the mails, good citizens frequently berate the Post Office, either by letter or in person, for "persecuting" an "honest man" who was just ready to bring to poor mankind health or wealth, as the case might be.

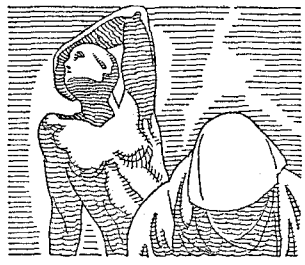
The swindler's philosophy seems to be this: If we don't relieve the public of their money, some one else will. They act often as though they possessed a divine right to mulct mankind. They seem to realize that their various rackets can have only a short life. They hope to make a "killing" before they come under the eye of the ever vigilant postal inspectors. They reveal little evidence of superior brains. They are, in general, a rather mediocre group, which means that the public is easily duped. Occasionally, one of them displays a sense of humor. There was the fellow who sold curs as pedigreed dogs. He contended that he was doing the owners of curs a great service in that he had given a definite market value to mongrels.

But they do not lack for sheer brass. It is not uncommon for them in their promotion literature to allude to the postal fraud statutes, remarking that if they were not an honest concern the government would not let them operate. Some have even written to the Solicitor's office to ask whether a proposed scheme would be allowed to "get by." And as if that were not enough, they have even asked us to revise their literature so that it can pass through the mails.

Art and Morality

By Albert Guérard

Can the artist adopt, in practical life, the moral code of the majority or must he defy it?



For the uncompromising Puritan, art is the nude, and the nude is sin. For the pure artist, morality means the leaden tyranny of the dull: it stifles joy and shackles genius. I know that in Milton puritan thought and pagan form were in perfect harmony: a miraculous hybrid, almost unique in literature. I am reminded also that for the Marxian critics, art and morality can not be separated. The Marxians may be infallible in economics: but their authority either on art or on morality is not established beyond cavil. On the whole, it may be said that the radicals on both sides are in perfect agreement: *art and morality won't mix*. This conjunction of the extremes is by no means unusual.

As usual also, the innumerable company of moderate and liberal men shake their well-balanced heads at the fanatics to the right and to the left of them. There is such a thing as a happy medium, whose fate it is to be struck and remain happy. There is a middle road which, we must assume, leads us somewhere, somehow. A wise eclecticism enables us to nibble pretty freely at our cake while preserving it almost entire. Art and morality will not mix? Why, the French Academy, a decorous club of elderly gentlemen interested in literature, awards the Montyon Prizes for Virtue. This reveals the fundamental *bourgeois* sanity of the French mind.

We come to this problem without any prejudice except a profound distrust of extremes and a deep-rooted contempt for compromise. This equipment is earnestly recommended to those who appreciate uncrowded roads. But uncrowded roads seldom lead to popular places.

We have, for our own satisfaction, listed some seventeen major aspects of the problem. They range from The Rights and Wrongs of Censorship to The Validity of Poetic Justice; from *Crime and Punishment* to *Murder as One of the Fine Arts*. In this brief study, we can offer only a few samples. As a bold simplification, we propose to eliminate all references to the abstraction Art and restrict ourselves to the more practical problem: The Morality of the Artist.

But this substitution may be chal-

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lenged. To what extent is the artist one with his art? The personal character of a scientist is no argument in the discussion of his facts and theories. Einstein, we understand, leads a life of unobtrusive saintliness. But we shall never accept his conception of space, straight or crooked, on the strength of his private virtues; and he might be proved to be a bigamist or worse, without impairing the claims of relativity. In more practical spheres, the question is more complex. We buy a car without investigating too closely the personal rectitude of Messrs. Buick, Chevrolet, or Locomobile. But the Irish cause was wrecked for a generation because Parnell's inamorata had a very disagreeable husband. The world chuckled over the reported dialog between David Starr Jordan and Thorstein Veblen: "Your marital relations are not satisfactory to the Board of Trustees"—"They are not satisfactory to me either." Veblen resigned: but his *Theory of the Leisure Class* lost none of its cumbrously searching irony. Where shall we draw the line? Must we deny ourselves the joy that Villon, Marlowe, Byron, Poe, Verlaine, Wilde, can bring, because their purity was somewhat mottled?

It took a long fight, rather absurd in retrospect, to get Poe's name into the Hall of Fame. The Dean of Westminster does not desire to have Byron among his parishioners in effigy (after all, the Abbey is still a place of worship, not a Pantheon). A few years ago, an adipose buffoon was banned from the screen, because a gay party had turned out tragically. In this case, the artistic sacrifice was infinitesimal. But shall we adopt a sliding rule—pitiless for the minor artist, indulgent for the magnificent sinner?

In the classical conception, beauty had an objective existence, and art was governed by eternal laws. The excellence of the work, therefore, did not in the least depend on the moral worth of the artist. Thus a sacrament is held valid, even though the priest who administers it be in a state of mortal sin. Classical art, logically, should partake of the impersonality of pure science. Yet the classical age took a totally different view. It was a commonplace of criticism that no bad man could be a good writer. "The verse," says Boileau, "is ever infected by the defilement of the heart." And it took courage on the part of the same Boileau to admit that a bad writer, like Chapelain, could be a good man. The

pedants of the Renaissance, when they differed on a point of Greek grammar, would accuse each other of unnatural vices. The people who did not like the comedies of Molière charged him with incest. Such were the amenities of literature in the great days of Humanism.

The absurdity of classicism in this respect was followed by the still greater absurdity of romanticism. From the days of Rousseau to our own, art and the artist have become inseparable. "The style is the man" much more literally than Buffon ever intended. Poets insist upon living their private lives in public. It is etiquette for them not only to kiss and tell, but even to kiss for the purpose of telling. But while personality is growing more obtrusive, it also becomes more irresponsible. Authors offer themselves to our moral admiration, but not to our moral criticism. They kill criticism in advance with the damning words: bourgeois, Philistine, Puritan. Greenwich Village hath spoken: the case is ended.

Whether it be the weird evangel of decadentism or the homely four-square kind, every artist worth his salt has a "message." Hemingway, Joyce, Michael Arlen—preachers all, no less than the hoary sophisticate known as Ecclesiastes. And it is not so much a doctrine they are preaching as *themselves*. Every philosophy is first of all a point of view rather than a system. In the beginning is the Man: dogma follows—alas!—almost inevitably. See the world as I see it, and you shall be saved. *The Confessions* are Rousseauism, because they are Rousseau. *My Thirty Years' War* is the Gospel according to Saint Margaret Anderson. A charming essay in *Living Philosophies* should be named *The Imitation of Our Lord George Jean Nathan*. Art can escape moralizing (would that Oscar Wilde had left the "lessons" out of *Dorian Gray!*), but it cannot escape morality.

It can, however, select its own brand. No particular kind has a monopoly of the name. Current practices as universal as slavery, polygamy, and human sacrifices were a few centuries ago, do not create a sacred code. We know men who cannot accept war, party politics, or the Stock Exchange as "moral"; and others whose conscience, although no less tender, lives in amity with these unclean monsters. The relations between art and morality are those of Proteus and Protea—which must have been richly bewildering.

Can the artist adopt, in practical life, the code of the majority, reserving his own ethics for the problems of his own craft? A doctor is a good citizen who practises medicine; a lawyer a good citizen who practises law; each is bound by certain professional rules. A conflict between the general and the special code is much more conceivable in the case of the average professional man than in the case of the artist. Lawyer, doctor, priest may be sworn to secrecy at times when silence amounts to complicity. The commandments of the literary man as such, on the contrary, are harmless. "Thou shalt not split an infinitive." "No *Deus ex machina*." "Avoid 'devastating' and 'tremendous': they are cankered": such as these may cause amusement in the layman, but will not give offense. As a matter of fact, the vast majority of writers do live according to a sane and sober code. Not only were most of the classicists and the greater Victorians "good" men: but most of the romanticists as well. Musset and Gautier posed as though they were in rebellion against every law, human and divine: and their worst offense was slackness in their duties in the National Guard. It is by no means proven that, from the most conventional point of view, poets are much worse than grocers or plumbers. There is a much fiercer light trained on their private affairs, no doubt. There are temptations thrown in their paths (read *These Restless Heads*) that very few grocers and no plumber would resist. But the literary life, whether in Baltimore or Carmel-by-the-Sea, cannot be all crimson, scarlet, purple, and other flamboyancies. On the other hand, there is no business so drab that it will be absolutely proof against divorce, bankruptcy, or dipsomania. In nine cases out of ten, literati are men like you and me. I should even say (why blush at the vernacular?) *just folks*.

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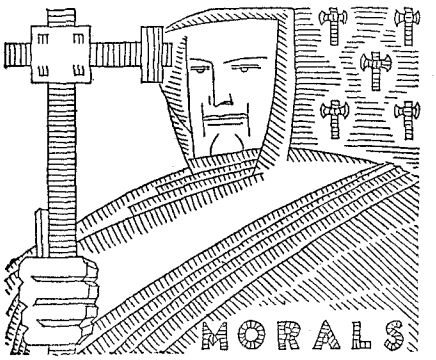
Second possibility: the artist does not challenge the accepted moral law: but he feels entitled to a certain leeway in its application. He is a privileged character. Delinquencies which in others would be sharply reproved become venial in his case; they may even be accepted and smiled upon as amiable weaknesses. Each profession has its own benefit of clergy. The scholar has a right to his absent-mindedness, which would be unpardonable in the railroad man or the bank teller. The soldier or sailor must be allowed his modicum of profanity. These minor flaws belong to the type: with a fine sense of æsthetic fitness, people live up to the eccentricities of the character they have adopted. If you want to be a convincing popular sea-dog, it is much easier to master a few expletives than to learn naval strategy. This is particularly true of the artist: few are those who do not consciously strive to be *artistic*.

The morality of the artistic type is very much the same as that of the spoiled beauty: the artist is supposed to be temperamental and irresponsible. There is no Babbitt who could not be "temperamental" if he let himself go: but he can't let himself go without making himself ridiculous, whereas the tantrums of an artist actually enhance his prestige. You will say that the comparison is hardly fair: artistic creation is a much heavier drain on your nervous resources than ordinary business. I am not so sure: if I felt my nervous system getting frayed, I would rather attempt to be a sonneteer than an operator on the Stock Exchange, a rent collector, or a book agent in the wilds of Los Angeles.

Business irresponsibility is a pleasant pose for the artist: when his mind is engrossed with beauty, how can he be expected to think of dollars and cents? Holy Writ, not a reassuring document for the conventional moralist, is full of dangerous precedents: the Prodigal Son, the lilies in the field, Mary who chose the better part. Harold Skimpole, in *Bleak House*, had worked artistic irresponsibility into a system: a child in money matters, he left all material worries to his Philistine friends. There was a great deal of the Skimpole in La Fontaine. Curiously enough, the greatest do not claim such an exemption. Shakespeare must have been a tolerable business man: he retired with a competence. Molière was not bad; Voltaire a financial



wizard; Goethe well above par; Victor Hugo a thrifty housekeeper and shrewd investor.

For the average man, morality has but three laws: Tell the truth (within reason); pay your just debts; and do not fornicate. In this last respect also, the artist is not so strictly bound as the Philistine. Indeed, amorous irregularities are almost a part of his rule of life: for he needs "experience." In Daudet's tale, *Father Gaucher*, the inventor of the elixir is allowed by his Superior to test and sample his product until he gets most royally drunk: but it is for the good of the community, who meanwhile are praying for his soul. "Adventures" are part of the artist's professional duties and professional risks: they are to be faced conscientiously, heroically.

There again, I have my doubts. Is there much more asceticism among business men than among artists? I am inclined to accept the view of George Jean Nathan in *Monks are Monks;* he ought to know. Certain it is that there is no relation whatever between "experience" and artistic achievement. Ada Menken, Mati Hari, and other illustrious vampires have written no supreme poems; quiet spinsters like Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, Emily Dickinson have probed the heart to its utmost depths. Lurid experiments in love are no more indispensable to the artist than are experiments in murder. Dostoievsky remains unsurpassed, without shedding any blood. There was a Baudelairian tinge in the crime of the young degenerate Hickman the Fox: but Hickman could no more write *The Flowers of Evil* than Baudelaire could mangle a child. The conscience of young artists may therefore be freed from the self-imposed obligation to sin.

Let us go a little further. So far, we have admitted the standard code as universally valid: the artist only claimed liberal exceptions. But the exceptions might be organized into a separate code, a secessionist morality. We should then have pluralism: the Philistine bound by his own rule, the artist obeying his own law.

To many, pluralism spells destruction. Yet the unity of the moral law has never been achieved. In olden times, each tribe kept its customs; and customs lived side by side, as do creeds in our own days. Castes have their codes. *Noblesse oblige:* a gentleman may defraud a merchant, but he must settle his gambling debts; he may seduce his friend's wife, but only if he be ready to kill his friend in honorable duel. Voltaire thought that a religion was needed for the people; many of our virtuous leaders believed in prohibition for the masses. Even in the Church, the rule of the monks is very different from that of the laity. Pluralism is a fact, unity an ideal—and not necessarily the right one.

If the artist were to draw up his own decalog, the first commandment would be: "Thou shalt have no other gods before Beauty." The second: *"Be* beautiful." Beauty-worship, like charity, begins at home; dandyism is an article of the Romantic credo. Third: "Revere Beauty in its most manifest incarnation, the human form divine. As Beauty is the sign and promise of Pleasure, honor Aphrodite and her priestesses": hence the latent or flagrant "pornolatry" in the extreme devotees of art—their breviary the works of Pierre Loüys. "If tragedy deepens the sense of life, and engenders beauty that safety and comfort never knew, be ready to inflict or suffer pain for the sake of Beauty": war is more "artistic" than peace, catastrophe than success, crime than craven submission. Worship the Blond Beasts, the splendid ruffians of the Italian Renaissance, the anarchist whose "gesture is beautiful." Finally, "as lust and pain are most exquisitely quickened when they blend into æsthetic ecstasy, follow the precepts of the Marquis de Sade and Sacher-Masoch." All this forms a consistent code; and I could quote chapter and verse for each of its articles. We call it Decadentism: but an insult is no argument, and we might as well term it *Ultimate Refinement*. If you are seeking Walter Pater's "moment," and "only for the moment's sake," the code is valid enough: one minute of ecstasy, even the ecstasy of horror, is worth a lifetime of drudgery.

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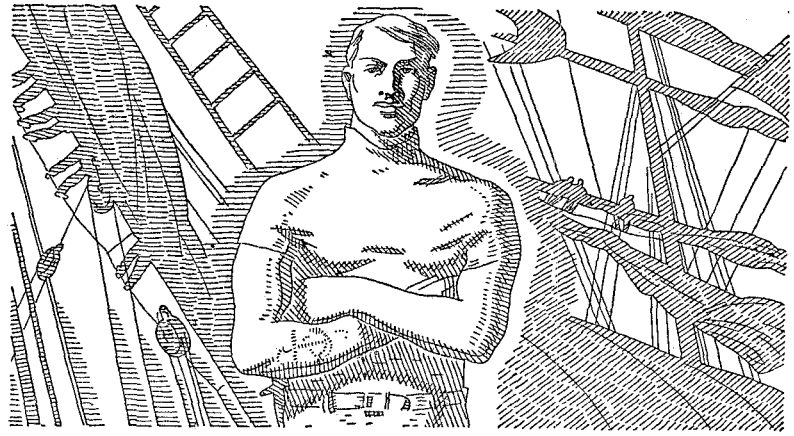
Yet there are fewer magnificent crimes committed by artists than by half-literate morons. Art can claim no great credit for Nero or Gilles de Rais —neurotics who barely reached its fringe. The pursuit of beauty "for the moment's sake," as preached by the mildest of Oxford dons, is a delusion. Perhaps it is a wilful myth. It is the spiritual revenge of the hypersensitive and frustrated egotist. It is a cry of despairing protest, not a call to action, not a rule of life.

The true artist knows that art is *long*. He thinks, not of the sudden flash, but of the endless chain of moments. Time is his medium and his law. Supreme art is restraint, discipline, wise economy: terms strangely reminiscent of that hateful Philistine, morality.

Should the artist then capitulate to the common code? I do not believe art would suffer irremediable disaster if its devotees paid their bills, were true to their wives, and remained legally sober. But this conformity to material standards is in truth immaterial. Obey the law, as you obey traffic regulations, so as to save your energies for higher things. The self-styled artist who claims a privileged code belongs to the ranks of the *poseurs*, the *pseudo*, or, in D. H. Lawrence's phrase, the *would-be*. The true poet does not waste his time fighting with the grammarian.

"Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's": do not claim exemption from the common toll. Art does not contradict Philistine morality: it goes beyond. With this wider aspect of the problem, we have no space to deal with any degree of adequacy. Suffice it to say that morality is all too often statistics with a sanctimonious mask. "These things are done: therefore they should be done." Against this fallacy, we need the explosive power of art. "I am I, living the adventure of my one life in a universe which, to me, is new. Why should I conform?" Art—that spirit of which professional artists have no monopoly—is the eternal challenger. And its one test, Beauty, although not a positive criterion, is indispensable as a check. No faith, no institution, no time-honored custom that makes for ugliness can be wholly right. Before the irremediably mean, art teaches us to say: "I will not serve." This refusal may not be "morality"; it may be the very reverse of "morality": but it alone can save morality from corruption.



Elegy for a Dying Tongue

By C. B. W. Richardson

Notes on the language of the sea and some of those who have used it, by a seaman

UNDERSTAND this speech that men of the sea have created and you will know it for what it is: a white, violent, cleanness of tongue. Leaving outside the question all purely technical nomenclature of spars and rigging, of ships' handling and navigation, it remains a jargon—but what magnificent jargon! It is compact with an amazing gusto, with humor and the downright clean bone of beauty.

"The rope hangs Judas," these children of the sea would say when a line was left insecurely belayed aloft—and therein lay all the simplicity of their thought, the wisdom of their understanding.

Looking at the sharply beautiful bows of a clipper they remembered the crescent of a new moon, and said: "She is moon-sheered."

Listening to the low soughing of the wind that precedes a hurricane (and there is no sound on earth more ominous), they looked at one another and at the sea, and said: "It's Davy putting the coppers on for the parson!"

They recognized in sentiment the arch enemy—the tie that alone could bar wandering from their lives and cast upon them the land-sickness of homes and women—and they mocked a shipmate in love as "doughy-nosed."

In their imaginations the maned ocean combers that run before the gale were "Neptune's Sheep," or "White Horses," so one of their brotherhood squandering his money ashore was said to be "buying a white horse." For they perceived that a sailor's gold, quite like the wave, looks very fine for a moment and then is gone, leaving no trace!

As though by instinct they knew the euphony of sounds, so subtle and so various in the English tongue, that picks up and plucks the heart of meaning from thought, and they set about to model them to their own use. Of created words—purely the folk-invention of men upon the seas—I give you just five: *snurge*, meaning to sneak out of a job; *willy-waws*, meaning light variable winds; *yaffle*, meaning to steal; *hugger-mugger*, meaning slovenly; a *gaw-gaw*, meaning a stupid seaman.

If the power of any argot is to be measured by the frequency with which it breaks through the crust of specialization and becomes a part of the vital language of a whole race, then this sea-speech is unparalleled in importance. There are whole argosies of these words, freighted with blue-water tradition, that have sailed amazing courses through centuries, to become anchored at last in the boneyard of our every-

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day speech. They lie unsuspected on the tongues of us all. Following their curious etymologies we come to understand that the Anglo-Saxon has a definite aptitude by which he assimilates all things nautical. It is as though the salt of the sea were on his tongue, the taste of it in his blood.

When our modern lady says that her new hat is "nobby," meaning smart, she is using purely nautical slang. "Old Nobs," or "Nobby," was the nickname of Captain Charles Ewart, R. N., a martinet who became famous for the nautical smartness and good style of the vessels under his command. "Fagged out," "touch and go," "by the boards," "figurehead," "by and large," "taken aback," "brace-up," "backing and filling," "junk," "at loggerheads"—they are all as sea-going as salt! We call the great piles of our modern buildings "skyscrapers," little thinking that the word in its deep-water sense means a sail, one of the fair-weather rigs of fancy canvas on the tall skys'l-yarders. They were also dubbed, derisively or proudly (according to men's temper and the weather), "ladies' pocket handkerchiefs," "moon-rackers," or "star-dusters."

To describe a boy as a "smart nipper," or an empty bottle as a "dead soldier," is to raise the ghosts of the wind-ships. The first simply means a ship's boy, one of whose duties on sailing ships is to pass and nipper the messengers to the cable when weighing anchor. The second refers to a bottle's ability to float head upward, as a dead marine or soldier is supposed to do owing to the traditionally large size of his feet.

When you order a hot grog on a cold day you might give a silent salute to the late Admiral Vernon of the Royal Navy who was known to his men as "Old Grog" because of a favorite grogram coat. He was the first man in history to order the English sailors' rum watered. And when you swear that you are caught "between the devil and the deep sea," know that it is not to his Satanic Majesty that you properly refer, but to a simple plank on a ship hull. It is the upper outboard strake and is called "the devil" because it forms the hardest seam to pay with pitch. In addition it accounts for the origin of the twin phrase, "the devil to pay and no pitch hot."

"Son of a gun," a vulgarism on shore, had a maritime history that is an ironic footnote to the bawdy days of our great-grandfathers. It is only eighty or ninety years ago that ladies of the beach, the unofficial and temporary wives of naval seamen, were allowed aboard men-o'-war. It was Queen Victoria who finally put a stop to the practice in the English service.

An old definition describes a blue-water sailor as: "Begotten in the galley and born under a gun. Every hair a rope-yarn; every tooth a marlinespike; every finger a fishhook, and his blood, right good Stockholm tar!" And an English captain, writing in his personal log in the year 1835, makes this interesting entry: "This day the surgeon informed me that a woman on board had been laboring for twelve hours and asked if I could fire a broadside to lew'ard so that the shock would assist nature. I complied with the request and she was delivered of a fine male child," the gentleman, we take it, being the first naval officer on record to achieve perfect results without hitting the target.

In my mind now is the figure of a man I knew in my first youth on the sea. He was old then, very old—a proud and lonely relic of the last great days of sail.

"The Doctor" was a "limejuicer" and had served his time as a boy in the old navy—what he called the "spit and polish navy." A great granite slab of a man, his face was burned dark as a sea boot. Still blue eyes peered out from under brows as white as the ragged manes of combers breaking on rock. Barbed and sea-bitter was his tongue. Even now I can remember the first bewildered awe with which I listened to his barbaric speech, a speech bristling and strong with the very taste and flavor of the sea.

To him a black night was "as black as the Earl of Hell's riding boots!" A drizzling rain was an "Irishman's hurricane"; when it blew it "blew marlinespikes," or "like an angry god on a hot dough-cake." Of a flat calm he simply said that the wind was "up and down the mast."

A sailor who was swinging his arms against his body to get warm was "beating the booby"; one who had his hands in his pockets had "both sheets aft." A thing that was honest was "straight up and down, like a yard of pump water." A clumsy fellow he referred to as "about as handy as a cow in a spit-kid!" A man of whom he did not approve was a "pinch-gut," a "sea-swabber" or a "shifting backstay." He was in "everybody's mess but nobody's watch." A good fellow, on the other hand, was "first on the tops'l and last in the beef-kid."

If he thought a man was crazy he said there was "a rat in his forechains." To loaf on deck was scornfully described as "two turns round the long-boat and a pull at the scuttle-butt." To buy a round of drinks was to "splice the main brace," in recognition, no doubt, of the fact that it is a difficult feat and requires a good man to do it! A weak drink was contemptuously dubbed a "gale of wind dose," and a strong one was declared a "second mate's nip." To add too much water when mixing a drink was "to drown the miller." And when a man's glass was empty it "had a south wind in it!"

It was from "the Doctor" that I first heard many of the old tales of the sea, stories that are being forgotten now, thrust aside and lost in the heavy-shouldered march of our modern progress. He told us of the fabled seaman "Jack Shilloe," a hell-rake who would "spit-to-wind'ard and call the cat a long-tailed bastard." In old tradition he appears as the ringleader of those godless tars who are supposed to have tapped off the alcohol from Lord Nelson's corpse on the way home from Trafalgar.

He spoke of "Tom Pepper," who was "kicked out of hell for being a bigger liar than the devil"; and of "Captain Bow-wow," the nameless Yankee skipper who is the classic example of an impatient seaman. It is said that once when coming alongside a dock the Captain was afraid that the new paint work on his hull would be scratched. With admirable quick thinking he seized a lady passenger's lap dog and, holding the animal over the side by the tail, used it as a fender!

Listening to our continual grumbling over the monotony of greasy tramp-steamer food, he told us how the hard bread of the sailing ships first came to be known as "pantiles." There was, it seems, a carpenter in the port of Iqui-

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que, Chile, who was mending the tiled roof of a house near the waterfront. Running out of clay tiles he took some pieces of pilot bread that an amiable Yankee sailor gave him and hammered them into place on the roof. Two years later the ship returned to that port and the "pantiles" were still in place, as watertight and iron-hard as the first day they were put up.

Like most seamen bred in the days of sail the old man was full of superstitions. He always, I remember, whistled when he was seeding raisins for duff or mixing a pudding. Such has been good wind-jammer custom for two hundred years, the whistle proving to all hands that the cook's mouth is empty and not full of plums. If a man in the mess or the galley rang a water glass, it was a serious matter, the ancient superstition having it that the ring sounds the knell of a sailor who will drown. If, however, the ringing is stopped in time "the devil will take two soldiers instead."

One day "the Doctor" was laid up with a slight spell of fever. In the evening after supper I wandered into his tiny cabin amidships to see if there was anything I could do. The old man was cheerful enough, propped in his bunk reading a dog-eared copy of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. He had on an ancient pair of steel-rimmed spectacles and peered doggedly at the pages, following the lines of print with a blunt forefinger.

I had a pipe lit and was anchored on the settee when the Captain and the second officer came in. The skipper went faithfully through all the gestures that doctors make in books. He felt the old man's pulse and then he made him stick out his tongue and say "ah-a-a-a." He even tapped the hairy chest, using his flat left palm and tapping with the knuckles of his right hand. It was like drumming on old oak. I thought that the Captain was interested in the Japanese tattooing and wanted to get a close view. He scolded a bit, trying hard to look dignified and severe, and when he went out he left two C. C. pills and two five-grain quinine capsules on the washstand.

"The Doctor" laughed, amused and scornful of all this attention, and insisted on sitting up with a pillow stuffed behind his back. He looked like a carved idol, very old and very wise, sitting there cross-legged in his bunk, pointing a finger at me and scolding amiably.

Following his directions I rummaged around in the locker looking for a package wrapped in canvas and tied with marline. There was a raffle of fancy gear that I had to dig through. I remember a Chinese brass box filled with coins; a turkish yataghan with an inlaid ivory hilt, and a pouch sewn of curious stuff that he said was the foot webbing of an albatross taken off the Horn many years ago. Finally I found what he wanted and unwrapped a square bottle full of what looked like a black plant floating in dark amber colored liquid.

It was Florida water: Sargossa seaweed, tropic rainwater, and rum. It was one of the old traditions, and now, among a new generation of men on new, steel ships, it was meaningless.

Sailors gathered the weed in the old days, dried and cured it carefully in the sun (some adding a pinch of spice, or even a pinch of snuff, according to individual recipe), and then bottled it with rainwater and rum. There were those, more conscientious than their fellows, who insisted that the rain must be caught on the night of a rising moon. They stowed the bottles away and brought them back to a hundred ports —to the girls of the dockside. In such magical stuff, they believed, was mysteriously caught the spirit of Florida, the fountain of an eternal youth. It was potent to cure sickness of any kind, but most particularly was it powerful to make a woman fertile and to bring forth from her strong sons.

I poured a half tumbler for myself and the old man drank out of the bottle. It was bitter, slightly brackish from the sea salt that had impregnated the weed. He had wanted, "the Doctor" explained solemnly, to bring it to a friend in Ireland who had been married for four years without bearing a child, but when he arrived in Queenstown harbor the good woman had passed away, having died in childbirth and leaving a pair of healthy nine-pound twins behind her.

Certainly this language is dying: yet it is not wiped out. The old gods die hard: they lurk still on men's tongues; they stir in imaginations moved dully by stories, by the face of the sea, by the force of an inner necessity that bends us against reason, against hope of self-interest or desire of peace, to an ancient way of life.

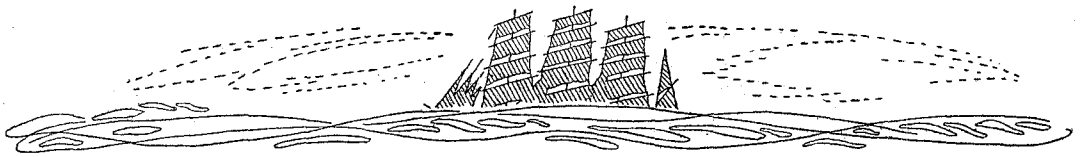
Yet even men's swearing now takes on a difference—it is repetitious, and it is dull. The old masters of the "sea-blessing," men whose salted tongues could bring a blush of shame to the face of the devil himself, are gone with the epoch that bred them. Theirs was not a gutter language. It was a savage and needful art of invective. If the new speech that has replaced theirs is less downright and brutal than the old, it is also less strong, and less innocent.

On the decks and in the new steel fo'c'sles of modern freighters you will hear a language compounded strangely of the argots of the racketeer and of the road, of the long-shore laborer and the common clerk. And you will hear, too, as dull and conventional and uninteresting an English as that of a university town.

In the end all this is so much word-stuff to be moulded; to be given new accent and color fitted to the needs of the ocean calling. For the essential temper of the men remains—and it is from temperament bequeathed by blood, and not alone from environment, that a living language springs.

So eternally the ancient sea takes unto herself all things, and eternally she changes them, reshaping their accustomed forms until at last:

"Nothing of them that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange."



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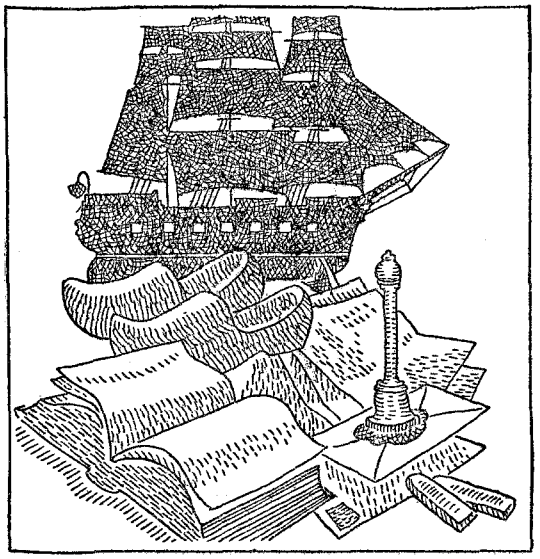
AS I LIKE IT

William Lyon Phelps



Concerning European Voyages . . . Munich Enthusiasm . . . Art, Drama, Music in Paris . . . The Works of Charles D. Stewart . . . English Speech and American

Paris, May 26, 1935.

Although I have spent a good many months in Germany in the course of my life, I never sailed from New York to a German port until this year. On the 20th of April, at one minute past midnight, the *Bremen* left her pier in New York. Many passengers seem to enjoy sailing at midnight, but I prefer to leave New York in the daytime, and see the details of the finest harbor in the world as we move slowly down the river and out into the ocean. The *Bremen* is the best ship I have ever travelled on, but I have not seen the *Rex* or the *Normandie*. A few passengers got off at Cherbourg, where the new pier has abolished the unpleasant tender, but the majority of the passengers disembarked at Southampton.

Although I have no nostalgia for times past and no longing for vanished youth, and though I believe old age is more exciting than any other time of life, and though my appreciation of nearly everything is much keener than when I was young, there is one fine rapture that I have never been able to recapture; and that is the emotion aroused by the first journey to Europe. Try as hard as I may—and for a rapture one should not have to try at all—I cannot come anywhere near the excitement I had when I saw Europe for the first time. The thrills I experienced then are fresh and vivid in my memory; I can recall them with perfect distinctness; but I cannot feel that way again.

I shall always be glad that I made my first voyage to Europe when I was twenty-five; in the very heyday of youth, and yet old enough so that every foreign scene was peopled with recognitions. I shall always be glad that the voyage was made on a small steamer of 4500 tons, that it had only one low deck, which was frequently awash, that she was partly propelled by sails, and that she made no stop anywhere between the Wednesday morning when she left New York harbor, and the Sunday afternoon eleven days later when she came to rest at Antwerp. Thus we sailed directly from a city in the New World to a city in the old; and stepped off the ship almost in front of a medieval cathedral. Never shall I forget that fair Sunday afternoon, when we sailed up the Scheldt, and saw the sails of the windmills turning in the sunshine, the green pastures and the cattle feeding, and the towers of the ancient city drawing near. I looked out of my hotel window that night, and I felt as if I were in a dream. "Is it possible that I am really in Europe? Is this actually happening to me?"

I wish I could feel that way again; but although some things actually gain in excitement by repetition, like the flowers that bloom in the spring, I can never have a recurrence of the excitement caused by my first journey abroad. Perhaps I should feel more like it if I went to a country I had never seen before; for in 1932, when we disembarked in Greece, I had thrills enough and to spare; yet even so, they were of a different kind from the emotion aroused by my first voyage.

Perhaps there are certain emotions that only youth can have and that even youth can have only once. You remember in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, we are told that when Wilhelm kissed the Countess, he had a sensation such as mortals have when they "taste the topmost sparkling foam on the freshly-poured cup of love." And Goethe was an authority on that part of human experience.

During that early voyage we lived close to the ocean; we were drenched more than once by huge billows that broke over the deck. But, as so often happens in other things, with the increase in luxury and animal comfort, certain sensations depart. A little while ago, when a traveller was asked, the day after he landed, if the sea had been rough, he replied, "I don't know; I never saw it."

Now while I am glad I travelled on a small and comfortless boat when I was young, I am equally glad that on this voyage we had a magnificent ship with every possible comfort.

The modern "luxury liners" are so huge, and the decks so enclosed, that it is like living in a colossal moving building, with elevators running six and seven floors up. Indeed on the *Bremen*, this leviathan of the sea seemed to me more like a great city. It had its fine residence streets, its handsome open parks for recreation and athletic games, its lakes for swimming, its shopping districts, cigar stores, and bar, its motion picture houses and orchestral concerts, its public library, its Roman Catholic Church, its hotels and restaurants, and its more crowded and more narrow streets where the working classes lived.

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Although it was April, and we might have had bad weather, as a matter of fact, with the exception of a part of one day, the sea was smooth and it is the only crossing I have ever made when there was not an ounce of fog.

Among all the directions that are nowadays given to travellers, what to do with one's baggage, where to go and what to see, with the possibility of buying European railway tickets before leaving New York—I bought all our railway tickets from Bremen to Munich, from Munich to Cologne, from Cologne to Paris, in New York—it is a pity that one important piece of advice is never given. That is the question of tips. On a steamer exactly what persons should be tipped and how much should be given to each one? During the last two days of every voyage, this is a matter that afflicts the peace of the majority of travellers; one does not want to be mean, one does not want to neglect any proper recipient, and one does not want to be foolishly lavish. This question seems unnecessarily troublous and disconcerting. I think it would be well if a certain percentage could be added to the passage money, or, if this is unsatisfactory to stewards and waiters, who probably get some excitement by not knowing how much will be given them, it would be a good thing for the steamship company to send a printed slip of confidential information to every passenger, giving the list of persons who are tipable and the fair amount to be bestowed on each. For the amount of the tip of course varies greatly with the price of the accommodations. I am sure that I speak for thousands of honorable, well-meaning, and perplexed ocean travellers.

I shall say nothing about politics in this article, because I really don't know anything about politics, except that I hate Communism, and because all politics and all political alliances are ephemeral. I did not go to Germany to study the political situation. I went there for the same reason that brought me there so many times in the past—theaters, operas, scenery, cafés, and the general social life of the people. Except for the extraordinary increase in the number of bicycles, the German towns seemed just about the same. Munich has always been my favorite Continental city, and the life there seems superficially to be about what it was in 1904. The war has caused innumerable household and private tragedies, as it has in France, England, and Belgium. But the people love Grand Opera and concerts, they fill the cafés and the beer-halls, they sit outdoors in the English Garden, they make their excursions into the surrounding country. For people who love winter sports—I care nothing whatever for them—I should think Munich would be more attractive than Switzerland. The Bavarian Alps are so near that one can reach them very quickly; and then when you don't want to ski or anything else that requires snow or ice, and in the intervals between such pastimes, you have all the resources of a great city—art, music, theaters.

I wish we had in America something like the Continental café; a place where one could go alone or in congenial company any time in the day or night, order a mug of beer or a cup of tea, coffee, or chocolate, or an entire meal if one wishes, and sit at a table for hours: talking or reading the papers, observing one's neighbors, and spending very little money. What a place the café or beerhall in Munich is for a solitary person! For he may sit alone and enjoy the spectacle, or if he be lonesome, he may converse as freely with the people at the same table as if he had known them for years. The city of Munich is like one family; the people are more than courteous, they are kind; they seem really interested in you, and in what you are doing. The beer-girls who wait on you have the affectionate solicitude of nurses with a patient; and the same is true of the salesmen and saleswomen in the shops. I know of nothing quite like this anywhere else in Europe.

Of course I wish the whole continent of Europe were as free in its attitude toward all races and in the public and open expression of opinion on all subjects as is Great Britain. But I am speaking here of the good things I saw in Europe and not of the darker or tragic aspects. Certainly the casual acquaintances one makes in the Munich cafés and the treatment one receives in the shops are a pleasant memory here in Paris. It is the difference between enthusiasm and sophistication.

In Paris we were greeted by a severe snowstorm on May 18; and indeed the weather since then has not been much to cheer an exile. I suppose Paris is the most beautiful city in the whole world; yet there are so many things to do indoors that one can endure rainy skies with fortitude. The most amazing event in many years is the present exposition of Italian art. I do not believe there has ever been anything like it in the history of painting. At the Century of Progress in Chicago, the collection of pictures justly attracted universal attention; but what shall we say of an exhibition that includes Raphael's "Madonna of the Chair," Botticelli's "Birth of Venus," Titian's "Venus," "Flora,"—why mention individual pictures? There are 490 Italian paintings in this exposition, many of them known in every corner of the world; an array of immortal works of genius. The bringing from various towns in Italy of these pictures that no money could buy and no treasure replace, seems to me one of the most audacious enterprises within human conception. Anyhow, here they are for two or three months, and a stream of visitors passes before them every day in awe and wonder.

The Paris theaters are so uncomfortable, so expensive as compared with Munich, and begin so late in the evening, that it is impossible to see many plays without exhaustion. But I was delighted to see *Topaze* in the original French version, which I saw in New York in translation a few years ago. It was first played here in 1928, and has been revived this season. It is a masterpiece of humor and irony—

how it would have pleased Mandeville! Its philosophy is summed up in one line *"Les hommes ne sont pas bons"*—a true statement, supported by the Old and the New Testament and by the observation of the wisest philosophers. And I will say that French audiences take fully as much enjoyment in plays that reveal and attack the corruption of politics as we do in America. Maxwell Anderson's play, *Both Your Houses,* certainly gave crowded audiences continual delight. Perhaps noth-

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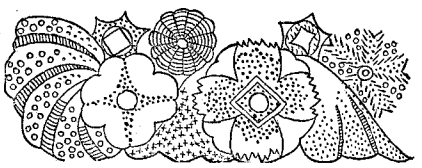
ing has fallen so low in public esteem as representative government. Its prestige has departed.

Of all the new plays in Paris during the present season, by far the most successful is *Espoir,* by the accomplished Henry Bernstein. It was put on for the first time last November, has had nine performances every week since then, and will probably run into the summer. It is beautifully acted, and Victor Francen, who takes the chief part, has pleased the critics and the public so much during the run of the play, that he has just been given the Legion of Honour. The play is quiet throughout, the interest being in the conversation and in the revelation of character. Like so many French plays, the dramatic excitement is confined entirely within the home of one family.

Although some critics have hailed this play as Mr. Bernstein's masterpiece, I was glad to see that the *Comédie Française* this week gave a revival of *Le Secret,* which I think is the best drama he ever wrote. I shall never forget seeing that in New York, with Frances Starr. At a small private musical evening given by my favorite prima donna, Emma Eames, one evening this week, we had the pleasure of hearing a young Italian violinist, Mr. Orlando Barera. He plays with such passion and intensity, and his personality is so attractive, that I was glad to learn that he will make his first visit to America this coming winter and will give a concert in the Town Hall, New York, in February. He ought to have a fine career.



I have been reading so many French and German books during the last six weeks that I have made little attempt to keep up with current publications at home. But there is one book that I confidently recommend to Scribnerians. This is *Fellow Creatures,* a collection of essays by Charles D. Stewart of Wisconsin. Mr. Stewart is the author of several of my favorite novels—*The Fugitive Blacksmith, Partners of Providence, Valley Waters.* He wrote a valuable book on puzzling passages in Shakespeare, called *Some Textual Difficulties in Shakespeare.* He has written books about birds, beasts, and insects, which show an uncanny knowledge of their behavior and habits. This new work, besides containing much information on animals, has autobiographical chapters of irresistible charm. When he was a boy, he made a living in museums by repeating *backward* either a whole sentence or the spelling of any word, no matter how long, how technical, or how difficult. This art, of which, so far as I know, he is the only living master, should attract the attention of Ripley.

Among the new society novels, I greatly enjoyed *Mushroom Heaven,* by John Wiley; it is a good story well told. Among the recent thrillers, I like especially *Who Rides on a Tiger,* by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes, whom we had the pleasure of meeting on shipboard; *The Case of the Counterfeit Eye,* by Erle S. Gardner; while one of the most ingenious murder stories I ever read is *Death of an Airman,* by C. St. John Sprigg. Last year I expressed in these pages my admiration for the murder story by Gelett Burgess, called *Two o'clock Courage.* I had a most interesting talk in Paris last week with Mr. Burgess, and I hope he will not only publish more murder tales, but will bring out a book on the philosophy of this particular art of composition. He has given a great deal of thought to it, and has many striking and original ideas on the subject.

One of the most entertaining and charming of illustrated books for children is *The Cocky Cocker Book,* written and pictured by Professor and Mrs. Loring Dodd, of Clark University.

Before I sailed for Europe Miss Eunice Query of Hudson, N. C., gave me some interesting information:

> Your discussion of the past tense of the verb *eat* in a recent issue of SCRIBNER'S was very interesting to me. You said that your father spelled and pronounced the past tense *eat* just like the present tense, and you asked if any of your readers knew of similar cases. In this section (the western) of North Carolina, it is quite the usual thing to hear people say, "I *eat* my dinner half an hour ago." Drills in school on *ate* have not proved successful in getting rid of the expression.
>
> The mountain people of North Carolina provide an interesting language study. Some of my students have found that expressions used in Chaucer's day are still prevalent among uneducated people whom they know. There is even one senior in High School who says *Holp* and *Holpen* instead of *help* and *helped.* I have often heard pupils speak of *outening* a light. Many teachers make a hobby of collecting these unusual expressions, in addition to keeping a list of classroom boners. Doctor F. C. Brown of Duke University, Durham, N. C., has a class in folk-lore which studies the language of our mountain people. The lack of contact with the outside world has not only kept them purely Anglo-Saxon in blood, but has also retarded the development of their language. Incidentally, the pronunciation used in this section is quite different from the popular idea of the Southern accent.

I am deeply grateful to Josiah Combs, Head of the Department of Modern Languages in Texas Christian University at Fort Worth, for the following letter:

> Your contribution of today interests me: Questions on English Language. Will the thing ever be standardized? Can it be done? It worried one John of Trevisa, away back in 1385, when he lamented: "It seems a great wonder how English, that is the birth tongue of Englishmen and their own language and tongue, is so diverse of sound in this island." And you recall of course Caxton's predicament when he set out to print his "Eneydos," his story about the eggs. "Loo, what sholde a man in thyse dayes now wryte, egges or eyren?" Truly, and how sholde a man *pronounce* "englysshe" even in the twentieth century? I have had no end of trouble in attempting to indicate the pronunciation of our Southern Highlanders, in some little studies during the past several years, in *Dialect Notes,* and other periodicals. I am myself a native of the Cumberland Mountains, in the wilds of Kentucky, where much that was Elizabethan is still spoken. Here and there I noticed some similar peculiarities of speech in England, where I once lived for a year.
>
> Yes, I have a little quarrel with the editors of both the Standard and Webster's. For a long time they have indicated the pronunciation of such words as carry, narrow, sparrow, etc., or rather the *a* in such words, as short *a;* now, it is my opinion that such is not the pronunciation of this *a,* even among educated people, in *all* sections of the country. In other words, this *a* does not at all appear to be pronounced as *a* in *hat.* Therefore, the pronunciation of *carry* that I have heard in all parts of the country, also in England and Scotland, is not the same as that indicated in Webster's and the Standard. The pronunciation with which I am acquainted in this word, that is, of *a,* is the same as the dialectic pronunciation of *a* in *grass, pass,* etc.; or, like *a* in *air!* In short, the sound which I have in mind, and certainly one which is common enough over the country among educated people, is not even indicated in our dictionaries.
>
> *Mais il est probable que je vous ennuie, monsieur! Voilà pourquoi cette lettre-ci ne mérite point de réponse.* The speech of the educated Frenchman appears to be far more standardized than that of the Englishman or the American. There seem to be at least three ways of pronouncing "England"! But in any case, *E* should become *I,* I suppose; yet prior to the mid-sixteenth century *E* was common enough. As you doubtless know, it was sometimes spelled with a *Y* in the sixteenth century. I am somewhat amazed at the pronunciation of this word in the Standard (Ed. of 1917). . . . The "Italian *a,*" so common among our English cousins? I mean, in such words as *ask, chance,* etc. I believe that by the beginning of the sixteenth, no, the seven-

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teenth century this sound had passed out in such words. Just when it was re-adopted, I am not certain. Possibly about the middle of the eighteenth century. Nor do I think that the British pronunciation of *been* is very ancient. If the so-called "Italian *a*" had been common in England in the seventeenth century, the great era of Colonization, some survivals of it would, it seems, be found today, among the Southern Highlanders. I have found only one survival (?) of it among the hillsmen: *tassel*, which the hillsman pronounces tossle.

You justify "storey," "cheque," "kerb," "tyre." That appears to be sound, in writing. "Pedlar"; that is "an" ubiquitous word! As to the second vowel in this word, the trouble is due to the fact that our English vowels (in atonic syllables) are not pronounced so clearly and distinctly as they are in most Continental languages, especially as clearly as they are in French and Spanish. Most Americans don't seem to distinguish between -ar, -er, -ir, -or, and -ur, in atonic syllables. I believe the English are ahead of us on this point.

Do you think that the pronunciation of *-ile* (as in *smile*) is more difficult than it is in Mobile? There is a tendency just now to pronounce it as in *smile*. I should never say "broadcast-ed"!

I don't think that many Americans are succeeding very well in their affectation for British pronunciation. The pronunciation of a few words in the British fashion does not make an Englishman! I like the speech of the educated Englishman, for the most part, but hardly believe that it is as logical as that of educated Americans. Our speech has progressed with the progress of the nation, and we have got away from much that is illogical in British English. Indeed, our spelling seems to be more sensible. British place-names and proper names are often outrageous in British pronunciation. Why say, also, "I should have liked to have seen him?" American English is certainly more colorful, more picturesque, more dynamic, albeit it is a bit slovenly in spots. It should be interesting, during the next century, this *lutte* between British English and American (English). I fussed about it with Mencken, in Baltimore, last year. American affectation for British pronunciation will be short-lived, I opine. British pronunciation, and the locutions and tournures characteristic of British speech in general are too difficult for most Americans.

I don't think the English are always fair with us in the matter of speech. After three centuries, American speech would indeed be expected to depart considerably from that of the *Muttersprache*, both in pronunciation and vocabulary. The same thing has happened in England, itself, since Shakespeare. One thing in favor of American speech is that, spite of the immense area of the country, and its population of 130,000,000, it is more homogeneous than British speech in the Isles. But in a sense, I hate to see the old sectional lines disappearing so fast; for this, the radio, good roads, and the automobile, and travel, are responsible. These days it's difficult to get a good, old-fashioned Southern dinner, *anywhere* in the South! Americans have begun to live and think about alike in all sections of the country.

After taking notes for twenty years, I have begun to pull together the whole thing, and to try to publish my book on the language of my Southern mountains. Please don't misunderstand my strictures upon English speech; I grew up using much of it. As you know, the Southern Highlanders are neither Southern nor Northern in their speech habits. But I must defend the speech of educated Southerners, for the most part. Northerners will never understand what "you all" means in the South. And the expression "right much," so common in Virginia, is as old as "Richard the Redeless," late fourteenth century (?). Even the dropping of the *r* has considerable historical foundation. But our Highlanders never drop *r;* on the other hand, they have a fondness for it which makes it excrescent in hundreds of words. The changes that American speech has been undergoing for so long, and is still undergoing, are due to the North, rather than to the South. Anyway, I wish somebody would muzzle some of our well known radio announcers. "Ee-ficient," "ee-fective," and many others, *ca me casse les oreilles!*

Please pardon me this interminable letter. I have been guilty of doing what Pascal did —and should have taken the time to write a short letter! But I had to get it off my system. It requires no response. It is as loosely written as was an item in one of the French papers about Al. Smith, in 1928: "M. Albert Smith, of St. Tammany, the best governor the City of New York ever had."

BOOKS MENTIONED, WITH NAMES OF PUBLISHERS

Fellow Creatures, by Charles D. Stewart. Little Brown. $2.75.

Mushroom Heaven, by John Wiley. Appleton Century. $2.

Who Rides on a Tiger, by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes. Longmans. $2.

The Case of the Counterfeit Eye, by Erle S. Gardner. Morrow. $2.

Death of an Airman, by C. St. John Sprigg. Doubleday Doran. $2.

The Cocky Cocker Book, by Ruth and Loring Dodd. Bruce Humphries, Boston. $2.

TWO FLINTS

By Jean Starr Untermeyer

CONSIDER this flint I found on the earth:
Its sides give no hint of the fire at its heart,
Three-cornered and fine—now what is it worth
With no friction to start the wild spark that its mate
Brought to flame that could brew a good potion for men,
Or could kindle a hearth, or light up the glen.

Beyond that grim line where fence halves the field,
Unable to shine, and powerless to yield,
The other flint rests in the half-rotted mould—
The foot of the farmer, the hoof of the beast
Stir without starting his flame in the least;
Impotent is he, and blunted and cold.

Oh, flint upon flint brought a fire to birth,
Flint played upon flint till each shape became sharp,
Their combat of love brought a warmth to the feast
And flint drew from flint a sound sweet as a harp.
This seems to covet the warmth of my palm,
Forgot its hot plenty in chillness and dearth;
One there, half-hid, lets the furrow embalm
His legend concealed from pryer or priest—
And both lock a story will never be told.

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Behind the Scenes

● About SCRIBNER Authors. . . . Sinclair Lewis in Vermont, Struthers Burt in Maine, Ernest Hemingway in the Bahamas. . . . Business and the College Man. . . . Birth Control and Social Morality. . . . Age and Joy.

SINCLAIR LEWIS says he wrote "Onward, Sons of Ingersoll" at Good Hope Ranch, in the mountains in Jamaica, last February and early March, between swims, and glances at the Duke of Kent and wife. Just now in Vermont, he is working 7 A.M. to 7 P.M. (with half hour out for lunch and half hour for a nap afterward) on a new novel to be published in early autumn —the first in a year and a half. *Work of Art* was the last one. And he has bought, but not dared to open, he writes, the four volumes of Vilfredo Pareto's *Mind and Society*.

Ernest Hemingway is in the Bahama Islands on board the *Pilar* with his wife and children. They caught the first big blue-fin tuna ever taken south of New York in the Atlantic. The hard part of catching them there is to bring them up fast when they sound before the sharks can hit them. When the water is from 400 to 700 fathoms it's not easy. The first two they caught weighed 381 and 319 pounds and were caught on heavy tackle in one hour and ten minutes, and forty-eight minutes, respectively. They have had three strikes from marlin and caught two, and have hopes for even bigger ones before the summer is over. The Baron and Baroness Von Blixen of Sweden and East Africa have been fishing with them.

Essentially of the people about whom she writes in *Country People, The Folks,* and in her short stories, including the present "Auntie Bissel," and always returning to them in Iowa, **Ruth Suckow** is in a wider sense the interpreter of the great middle classes all over the country, for she knows New York and Colorado, California and Boston, New Mexico, Vermont, New Hampshire. She was born in Hawarden, Iowa, daughter of the Congregational minister, who sympathized with her ambition to write which occupied her attention even as a child. After finishing at Grinnell College it was necessary to earn the money to give her leisure to write. So she learned the hard and difficult labor of beekeeping and from 1921 on, while her stories were becoming famous, her "Orchard Apiary" in Earlville, Iowa, was supplying honey to Dubuque and the neighboring small towns. If there's one thing that makes her angry it's to have people rave poetically about beekeeping. She knows what it is to be stung, to "struggle with swarming blobs of bees with long heavy poles" and to lift frames during a nine or ten hour day. Yet she loves the work. In the winters she has studied at the Boston School of Expression, lived in New York, writing all the time. In 1929 she married Ferner Nuhn, from Iowa too, and now, when they are not travelling in America somewhere else—she has never had time to go abroad, she says—they are living in their house in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

About such a world figure as **Nicholas Murray Butler,** president of Columbia University, there is little for the outsider to chronicle that the reading public does not already know. In "Companionship and Conversation," the first article of a series to be published in the Magazine, and in the others to follow, he himself will discuss some of the many interesting people and experiences he has encountered in his brilliant life "Across the Busy Years."

Evan Shipman, son of Louis Evan Shipman, former editor of *Life,* has been writing for years about horses and people connected with the equine world. He has covered horse races for newspapers in this country and abroad and he is now writing a book to be published soon.

This is the first summer in many years that **Struthers Burt** has not been to Wyoming. Until the end of June he was in North Carolina, where he says the change in the weather has made it a beautiful summer resort—cool breezes, enough showers, green grass, and a multitude of birds. "If the Republicans can blame the dust storms on the New Deal, as I found some of them doing down in Aiken this spring, then I should think the New Deal could take credit for the lovely May and June North Carolina has had: especially the thrushes and whippoorwills." Both of his children are working in Maine this summer so that he and Mrs. Burt (Katherine Newlin Burt) have taken a house at Sorrento for July and August. "As I haven't seen Maine for twenty years, I am looking forward with some curiosity to exploring it; if for no other reason than to see how far short it falls of Booth Tarkington's enthusiastic descriptions. I notice also that practically all the descriptive folders issued by the Maine Tourist Bureau have a beautiful picture of a bathing girl as cover, which bears out my contention, hinted at in 'Miss America,' that if it wasn't for bathing girls business in the United States couldn't function, NRA or otherwise."

C. E. M. Joad is a philosopher, writer, and lecturer, who says that although his main interest is philosophy he finds himself always unable to keep his finger out of the pie of social affairs. On the whole he doesn't like it, "since my intrusions into current affairs usually have the effect of getting me into hot water with somebody. Thus I have, in the past few years, succeeded in provoking clergymen with *The Present and Future of Religion,* American citizens with *The Babbitt Warren,* and all decent-minded people who could bear to read it with *Thrasymachus, or the Future of Morals;* my autobiography, *Under the Fifth Rib,* has appeared to provoke all its readers more or less impartially. It has sold like hot cakes in England, but good Americans seem content to ignore it." He is an Englishman, Balliol College, Oxford, and teaches philosophy and psychology at the University of London. He is the author of more than fifteen books; has a liking for riding, walking, hockey, tennis, chess, and bridge and an aversion for motor cars, golf, and whiskey.

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He cares more than anything else for peace, and believes that the next war will destroy irretrievably such civilization as western Europe possesses.

Karl A. Crowley has been the solicitor for the Post Office Department since the beginning of the present administration. He was born in Tennessee, graduated from Cumberland University, and practised law, still in Tennessee, until 1919. Since then he has been engaged in the general practice of law in Texas.

C. B. W. Richardson sails as able seaman in the Merchant Marine. He is twenty-nine years old and has been a sailor, a stevedore, a tropical tramp, a newspaper writer and an advertising copywriter. He was educated at Staunton Military Academy in Virginia, from which he ran away to sea. He writes: "I am a sailor, a fo'c'sel-stiff who climbed up through the hawse hole, and no literary fellow. I have swallowed the anchor time and again, but it wouldn't stick. Longshore respectability is too flat a dish and an office is my conception of hell made concrete and visible. My pleasure is to hang over the forepeak and watch porpoises play at the ship's bows. . . . I have a notion that no one has ever told a tale so simply and beautifully as the Viking saga-tellers. I am now studying Icelandic to be able to read them in the original. I would rather have done one job like Colonel Lawrence's translation of the *Odyssey* than ten of Joyce's *Ulysses,* and would ten times rather have ridden on one desert raid with the King of Arabia than do either. At present I am at sea, a sailor on the 'gravy-eye watch' in the fo'c'sel of the American tanker, *M. S. Brilliant.*"

Albert Guérard was born and educated in France although he has taught in this country for more than a quarter of a century. He teaches general literature at Stanford University and by general literature he says he means simply literature, living literature, without regard for official compartments and departments, ancient or modern, learned or popular, imported or homegrown. He is against every form of unreasoning nationalism. His wife, as Graham Munro, writes short stories; he has a daughter, a son, and a fox-terrier, Rococo-Barocco. He is the author of ten books and countless articles. His book *Literature and Society* will appear in the fall.

WILLIAM L. FLETCHER'S article "What Business Wants of the College Man," coming just as seniors were pouring from colleges out into the wide, wide world, aroused much comment in college circles and elsewhere. The Baltimore (Md.) *Evening Sun* carried the following editorial:

NOTE ON GRADUATES

A writer in the June SCRIBNER'S, discussing the subject of what business wants from the college man, says:

There are some common mistakes that occur even as early as the first interview. For example, an error that is especially irritating to an executive is the confusion of matters of opinion with fact. An employer is not likely to excuse such loose thinking by a college man. He considers that college at least should teach men *how* to think if not *what* to think. This natural tendency of youth to become dogmatic over questions of opinion leads them with fresh enthusiasm to tell their employers during the first week on the job how to run the business.

One wonders from what colleges this man—he is a "personnel expert"—has drawn his specimens. Certainly there are plenty of employers who will complain that in their experience the trouble with the typical college man is that he has no opinions on anything. Far from being cocky, he is too much inclined to take anybody's word rather than rely on his own judgment; for in most colleges students have hammered into them for four years the fact that no opinion is worth anything as against the evidence of experience and experiment.

Indeed, when a cocksure lad does emerge from college, many employers welcome him joyfully. Here, at least, is something one can hammer on, and perhaps a man can be shaped out of the material. But not even the blows of experience can beat putty into any permanent shape.

INTELLIGENT FINGER-POINTING

Sir: SCRIBNER'S should be congratulated on William L. Fletcher's article, "What Business Wants of the College Man"; also, Mr. Fletcher for writing it. There was more intelligent finger-pointing in that article than in all the bales of weeping in print over the woes of the college folk which have been perpetrated in recent years.

There should be more than a hint in Mr. Fletcher's article for some college presidents and professors. It might not be amiss if they would brush up on what "education" comprehends. According to the dictionary nearest my hand, the verb "educate" means, primarily, "to teach and discipline so as to develop the natural powers"; secondarily, "to develop and train for some special pursuit." Educating, according to the secondary meaning of the verb, is generally well done in the professional schools and sometimes in the specialized courses; otherwise, not so good.

Old-fashioned believers in education—and there is still something to be said for this particular old-fashioned notion—hold that education should lead its recipient toward finding his place in the world of things as they are, and adjusting himself to it. When he has done this he will have a firmer take-off for reconstructing the universe, if that be his ultimate ambition.

BERNARD J. MULLANEY.

Chicago, Illinois.

LARGE FAMILIES

Sir: Just a line to thank you for your courage in printing that article, "Social Morality in a Diminishing Population," by Frederic Osborn. In a country which looks upon the possession of one child as a misfortune and upon large families as symbols of sexual degeneracy, it takes nerve to even suggest that there is another side to the question. For my part I think that a nation can not only survive but retain much of its virility in the presence of prostitution, polygamy, and some other revolting sex perversions, but when it goes in for birth control, that nation is doomed to a speedy death. The clergy and the religious press give their blessing (one expects that), but when our scientists with their vaunted detachment and honesty join in the chorus it becomes really disheartening.

Much of what the apologists for birth control say is correct, but what they ignore is more significant. They assume that all classes diminish in the same ratio when, as a matter of fact, the lower classes are as prolific as ever. They make owlish statements about a static food supply. They do not mention the fact that this country was overpopulated with some 400,000 Indians. Nowadays with scientific agriculture I believe that the Arkansas valley where I live could supply the whole country with food. They do not mention the fact that while there are theoretical arguments for birth control, in practice there is no stopping place between large families on one hand and one or no child families on the other.

Perhaps if we were to sterilize the feeble minded and the paupers it might make child bearing more popular.

DAVID COLE.

Great Bend, Kansas.

AGE AND JOY

Sir: I was very much interested in the anonymous article in the March issue of SCRIBNER'S, "Age Has Its Joys," which took a passage from my book, *Anne Sullivan Macy* as its starting point. ("Is any old person really happy?") This is not the first time the passage has drawn fire. Shortly after the book was published Mr. P. W. Wilson in *The New York Times* said that "in the entire range of literature it would not be easy to find an epilogue so bitter as this, inscribed on the printed page by a hand that has been dedicated to a benevolence so continuously forgetful of self." Like your anonymous author, he cited Robert Browning's famous lines from "Rabbi Ben Ezra" in rebuttal, but neither pointed out that Browning wrote them before he himself had qualified as an "old man." He was fifty-two when the poem was published—only a few years older than Mr. Alexander Woollcott, for example.

Mr. Wilson's comment brought prompt denials. Here is a typical one from a woman journalist of sixty who is still much too lively

(*Continued on page 12*)

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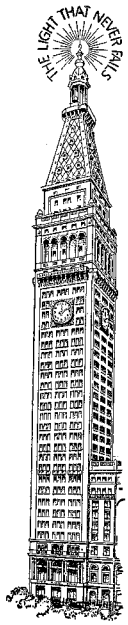

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If I Should Ever Travel

By Katherine Gauss Jackson

● The *Normandie* discovers America. . . . Vacation possibilities near the city in Pennsylvania, Atlantic City, Saratoga. . . . Fishing in New England and a booklet about it. . . . Struthers Burt writes something new on dude ranching.

And so the *Normandie* came up the bay. No wide-eyed band of savages lining the shore to watch the first Dutch boats up the Hudson could have looked with more wonder and admiration than the thousands of New Yorkers who crowded the river front on buildings, cars, and every available vantage point to see the *Normandie* make her way to the pier at 49th Street on the 1st of June. But the *Normandie's* welcome would have sent the savages back, back into their native forests, and turned the Dutchmen's boats hurrying out to sea in surprise, terror, and consternation. It even astonished us, vintage 1935.

The first I heard of it was at noon, walking down Fifth Avenue after lunch, blocks from the scene of action. Suddenly a voice from the clouds boomed out, in far from angelic tones, so that all on the Avenue stopped and looked up to listen: "THE NORMANDIE IS COMING UP THE HARBOR!" People's faces lighted. They looked at each other, and strangers smiled together with pleased excitement. The airplane voice echoed on through its loud speaker. "VISITORS ARE WELCOME!" And then again, "THE NORMANDIE IS COMING——"

The next day 9200 people made the tour of the ship, and thousands more were turned away. Cross-town bus drivers complained bitterly at the upsetting of their schedules. That evening after work, people lined the water-front to stand and look up at the towering prow resting easily at its mooring, and many paid an enterprising boatman a pretty sum for the privilege of putting out in his tiny launch merely for the chance to go the length of her and see the stern. A large milk company, whose stables are conveniently situated near the pier, took advantage of the opportunity and did a rousing business in chocolate milk, and many learned for the first time what happens to milk wagons once they vanish from the morning streets. For the elect there were dinners and banquets. For every one there was excitement in the airplanes and autogiros overhead; in the little and not-so-little ship models in the store windows so that the sidewalks were blocked with people who stopped to look; excitement in the tall headlines in the papers, in the flags flying on the Avenue. Pride and exhilaration and a common enthusiasm walked the streets the day that New York welcomed Her Record-Breaking Majesty while man contemplated his newest conquest of Homer's ancient and loud-sounding sea. And it was right and proper that they should, and Neptune didn't mind, but only smiled, for even the *Normandie* had waited in the harbor for the tide.

Short Vacations

Now she is in regular service and some of you have made the crossing with her. Others like me, not so fortunate, have taken other boats or trains and find yourselves now back at work with vacation behind you. Yet there is no necessity for us to abandon hope, all us who have returned. There are week-end trips to contemplate, excursions, retreats, excitements to keep us and the summer alive.

If you live in the East—a fact I too often unwittingly take for granted—there are many avenues of escape from your desk. (If you live in the West you'll week-end at the San Diego Fair anyway, and I need not waste my words.) In Pennsylvania there is Shawnee on the Delaware, and Buck Hill Falls in the Poconos, both of which provide all week-end necessities for a very good time in a very small space and very lovely country, in fine hotels. Both are within a few hours of New York or Philadelphia by train or motor, and are also fine escapes from Buffalo, Rochester, Washington, Pittsburgh, or Albany. It's wise to make reservations at either place in advance.

And in New Jersey there is always Atlantic City, that answer to every pleasure-seeker's prayer. For me there will always be something tragi-comic in my first memory of the place. A generous family friend had offered to take not only my mother and father, but also my brother and me (aged seven and eight), to the glamorous resort for a two weeks' stay. For weeks we had plagued our weary parents for exact descriptions of the ocean, and why did they have board walks instead of side walks and Mummy, what is a hotel? And then after an enthralling train ride which must have lasted all of an hour, suddenly there we were. We were to stay at one of the largest hotels and I remember quantities of red plush and gilt. I remember the milling people and the excitement everywhere. I remember my first terrified and then exalted experience with elevators; I remember my first pony ride along the beach, the entrancing chair ride along the board walk, my first movie, my present of an enormous doll, and I remember, inevitably, salt water taffy all over the place. Strangely enough, I have no recollection of my first glimpse of the sea, or of being impressed with it in the slightest. Perhaps in view of all else to distract me, that is not so surprising. In any case it was a world enchanted. The next day, the wrath of heaven descended. My brother came down with chicken-pox, obviously contracted at home, and in spite of prayers and entreaties, in spite of tears and pleading, not only he, but also I, were promptly shipped back home with the compliments of the hotel. It was a bitter blow and I was never content till I could go again. It really is a playground extraordinary for all ages alike—and you may rest assured that your children will be well guarded against infectious diseases.

And now that it is almost August there is Saratoga with its new spa and its old lures—the race track, "the mecca of social leaders from all parts of the

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United States and foreign countries," Saratoga Lake, the Washington and Lincoln Baths, the fine estates with their gardens open to the public, the cottage where General Grant spent the last days of his life, the Golf Course, the Congress Park Concerts where was once the most famous gambling house on the continent—shades of John Morrissey and "Dick" Canfield—and whether you're historically minded or not, there are few Americans who will want to leave without seeing the battlefield where Burgoyne surrendered to Gates, in an old war, in a new country when a man by the name of Benedict Arnold was every boy's idol throughout the land.

Booklet on New England Fishing

I have on hand a great number of little folders called "Fishing in New England" which are as complete and tidy little bits of information on the subject as I have ever seen. Not only are there detailed lists of where to go for what, but license costs, game laws and dates of fishing seasons are tabulated so that you can find answers to your questions at a glance. *And* in addition there are six pages of exact description of how to go after what fish —both fresh water and salt water—that maybe an expert would scorn, but that to a layman look more learned and unintelligible than Sanskrit. Here is a sample:

"Salmon, togue (lake trout) and squaretails (brook trout) in New England waters will rise to slowly trolled flies or minnows, or to spinners ahead of worms. . . . Use large bucktails or streamers, and troll slowly, or cast, in water twenty to forty feet from shore and off the ledges. . . . Best streamer and bucktail flies are Supervisor, Black Ghost, St. John, Grey Ghost, Lady Doctor, white tipped Monteal streamer, Parmachene Belle streamer, and Edson 'tiger,' light and dark. These catch trout all over New England."

If you can read that without a trot, you are a fisherman, no questions asked, and I'd be glad to send you a complete booklet on request. "Edson tiger, light and dark." Mercy. What a lot of things there are to know about everything, to be sure, but if you are a fisherman with any hope of getting away for a week-end or more in New England, you will want this booklet and as I say, I shall be glad to send you one. In many instances it even gives the price of bait. Green crabs, for instance, sell for 25 cents a quart in the bait shops. That's for tautog, believe it or not, and tautog, they say, is a fish.

Canada is only a step from New England, and Montreal is only over night from New York—perfectly possible and highly recommended for a week-end. And there is always Bermuda for a long week-end. Forty-two dollars minimum is the round-trip fare.

Struthers Burt on Dude Ranching

For some who have thought of ranching for the summer, but have not yet quite closed the discussion, perhaps this will be the final argument. Sometime ago I wrote Struthers Burt and asked him if there was any new slant on ranching. I didn't hear anything for a week or two and decided there was nothing that had not been said. I should have known better. "You ask me to say something new about dude ranching," he writes now. "That is almost impossible because, since people began to discover, five years or so ago, what a dude ranch was, almost every one who has visited a dude ranch has written something about it. The bibliography must be immense. By now almost approaching that of Shakespeare. But I'll say this—I often wish, and sincerely, that I was not a writer, because, if I wasn't a writer, I would still be a dude wrangler, and whereas writing, in all its manifold aspects, except that of actual composition, is a nasty job, dude wrangling is a heavenly one. A well-run dude ranch from the owners down, satisfies almost every normal human instinct, and stands as a contrast to the disorderly lives that most people, even the most fortunate, have to live most of the time. There is cohesion and ease and a sense of direction. Cohesion because there you are —just a few of you, and each one in his place—off by yourselves in a small and self-contained environment. There is ease . . . all you want . . . of social intercourse and material living. And there's a sense of direction, because everything you do, from a horseback trip to fishing, seems to have some point and sense to it. Ranch life is colorful, adventurous, hardy, humorous, and healthy beyond measure, and perhaps, above all, it satisfies the ancient American nostalgia for pioneering. It's like doing things with your hands. And there are simplified and definite horizons. The country doesn't just go on and on and on, the way most other countries do now with their motor cars, and highways, and big or

(Continued on page 12)

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If I Should Ever Travel

(*Continued from page 11*)

small houses, and swimming parties, and cocktails, and girls playing tennis in shorts. The Far West, save for its mountains, is the way Long Island must have been two hundred years ago when it was still nice.

"You say all this isn't new? Yes it is. It's new . . . and also very old. New because people have forgotten. You don't even have to think of Communism or Fascism, or any other panacea, on a ranch . . . ranch life follows a pattern too simple and well proven. And another one of man's unsatisfied desires—perhaps the most fundamental and most needed at present—is partially satisfied. It takes a stout materialist . . . cynic, or wise-cracker, or disciple of dialectic materialism . . . to believe that is all there is to it if he rides much by himself in the Rocky Mountains, or at night looks up at them. It's easy in New York to thumb your nose at mystery. Try doing it in Wyoming!"

Behind the Scenes

(*Continued from page 128*)

to find "the sunshine, the distant sail, the shimmering sand, the little sandpipers . . . entirely sufficient" for her enjoyments. "He seemed to think there was great bitterness there," she wrote. "I don't see it. Would not any person of a sceptical turn of mind and of abnormally active temperament (*stormily* active) feel that way about old age? So much bunk has been written about the 'beauty of old age' that when any one comes out with the truth, it is dubbed bitterness. I have for long felt just as Mrs. Macy does, but I am certainly not bitter."

The meaning of old age is so personal and individual a matter that what one says is not apt to hold for another. In point of years I have as yet no right to speak except to say in passing that I have found maturity a much happier time than youth, but I have friends in their middle thirties and early forties for whom this is not true. I am sure that no one would wish to take from your anonymous author a single one of her charming contented days, but is it quite fair to have one who is in full possession of health and sight compare herself with one who is blind and therefore unable to read, ill and therefore unable to walk? Mrs. Macy has built her life upon service and today finds herself unable to serve. Those indomitable shoulders that have always helped Helen Keller bear her burdens are no longer equal to their task, and yet as Mrs. Macy lies at home in pain and darkness there is never a minute, never an hour when she is not planning for Helen's future. She could be happier if she were more selfish, but in the problem that confronts her is it likely that the little sandpipers on the beach could be of much help to her—even if she could see them?

Very sincerely yours,

Garden City, N. Y. NELLA BRODDY.

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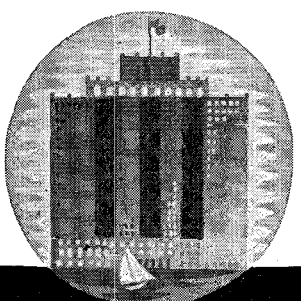

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